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Mandelson anger over gay smear story



Peter Mandelson: victim of 'vicious smear campaign'

Ewen MacAskill, Chief Political Correspondent

THE man at the heart of allegations about the private life of the Secretary of State, Peter Mandelson, broke his silence yesterday to dismiss allegations that he had been involved in a "vicious smear campaign" against the minister. "I think

it is disgraceful for William Hague to take innuendo, lies and smears as part of a process of destruction of the lives of professional people," he said. Mr Hague, during the Queen's Speech debate last week, surprised the Commons when he made a reference to "Lord Mandelson of Rio". The Government saw this as a deliberate and underhand attempt by Mr Hague to get into the political arena a series of lurid allegations made by Punch magazine this month about a visit to Brazil in July by Mr Mandelson.

The magazine claimed in a lengthy article that Mr Mandelson and Mr Dowle, a former EBC political correspondent, had visited sordid bars and nightclubs in Rio. Mr Dowle, speaking from his home in Ipswich in Rio yesterday, described the Punch allegations as rubbish, from beginning to end. "I think that Peter and myself have been the victims of a horrendous smear campaign that is like something out of Kafka. It is not clear who has been our judge, jury and prosecution."

Mr Dowle's decision to speak out, done with the blessing of the Government, represents a high-risk strategy as it will further fuel the story. Mr Mandelson and Mr Dowle had initially agreed to say nothing in the hope that silence would have killed off the allegations but there has been a steady drip of mainly oblique references in the press, culminating in Mr Hague's quote.

When the Daily Telegraph ran a version, one of Mr Mandelson's aides persuaded the editor to have it dropped after the first edition, insisting it was entirely untrue. The decision to go public marks a change of tack and is partly because of the growing body of newspaper cuttings about the Rio visit going unchallenged.

A friend of Mr Mandelson said: "The Tories have conspired in the spreading of these smears. It is underhand and it is vicious and they owe an apology, especially Hague." The Government feels vindicated by a Mail on Sunday investigation which yesterday concluded the Punch story was without foundation. Mr Dowle, who has refused to speak to the Mail on Sunday or any other journalist over the past few weeks, said

he had had a horrendous time since the story broke. In a detailed rebuttal of the Punch story, Mr Dowle went over Mr Mandelson's itinerary for the first time. He had met Mr Mandelson, whom he had known since he had been a political correspondent in the 1980s when Mr Mandelson had been Labour's director of communication, after a BA flight from London on July 18. They had gone to Mr Dowle's home for a bottle of wine and then gone into the centre for a tour that included a visit to restoration work, a baroque church where a wedding was being held, and the

site of the massacre of eight street children. "There was no nightclub at all. He was in bed at 10.30," Mr Dowle said, adding it was absurd to believe that someone would come off a long flight and want to go bopping. He said Mr Mandelson would have had to be "superhuman" to have done that. Mr Mandelson and Mr Dowle were accompanied by Mr Dowle's partner, Fabricio da Silva.

QCs set to lose 'fat cat' money

Clare Dyer, Legal Correspondent

MINISTERS are considering far-reaching proposals to end controversial "fat cat" payments to top QCs who have earned as much as £400,000 a year from legal aid.

The Lord Chancellor wants to scrap higher pay rates for QCs by offering barristers a "rate for the job" and to halt double-manning by barristers in legal aid cases.

Lord Irvine, who has publicly criticised high-earning QCs as "fat cats", believes current practices cost the taxpayer millions of pounds a year that could be better spent on basic legal help for the poor.

In a move likely to be opposed by barristers, he plans to make sure that legal aid pays for only one barrister in the vast majority of publicly funded cases.

Until 1977, Bar rules banned QCs from appearing without a junior barrister to assist. But although the so-called "two counsel" rule was abolished, the practice persists in most cases. The result in legal aid cases is that the taxpayer has to pay a large fee for the QC, plus typically two-thirds of the QC's rate for the junior, on top of solicitors' charges.

Ministers accept some cases, such as serious fraud, will need two barristers. But they believe such cases will be exceptional and in most cases which warrant QCs they will have to do the work alone.

discuss before we come up with a policy statement". He added: "Most silks [QCs] do a different level of job. Are the Government proposing to pay consultants the same rate as GPs?"

The Access to Justice Bill, expected to be published on Wednesday, will contain powers for the Lord Chancellor to make regulations ending double-manning and prescribing a rate for the job, though no decision has been taken to use the latter power. The rules axing double-manning could be brought into force next year.

The judges, who decide in crown court criminal cases how many lawyers a case warrants and at what level, will be given guidance on which cases are exceptional enough to merit two barristers. In some parts of the country judges regularly approve QCs to defend in rape cases, while in other areas rapes are routinely and more cheaply handled by senior juniors.

Ministers feel that judges should not take such decisions without guidance because they have no means of weighing up the relative priorities between crown court cases and other claims on the legal aid fund.

The Bar's system of work allocation currently encourages the use of two barristers. Usually a civil case goes first to a junior who does the preparatory work. If the Legal Aid Board agrees the case is complex enough, the junior brings in a QC. The silk is often reluctant to cut the junior out, even though the case could be handled by a QC alone. One senior QC admitted: "It has been abused like everything else."

He said QCs' clerks regularly gave backhanders to the clerks of juniors in other chambers who brought them into cases. In future, a junior who wanted to bring a QC into a civil case would have to submit an opinion to that effect to the legal aid authorities. If the application was successful, the junior would then drop out of the case.

US urges Pinochet return

Quiet pressure by Washington adds to dilemma for Straw

Ewen MacAskill, Elizabeth Lowe in Santiago and Nick Hopkins

THE US is quietly putting pressure on the British Government to allow General Augusto Pinochet to be allowed to return to Chile.

The US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, has raised the issue twice in the last fortnight with the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, according to Foreign Office sources.

Washington has kept a low profile since Gen Pinochet's arrest and maintained publicly that it is a legal issue, but in private the US has expressed concern that the affair is destabilising democracy in Chile.

The disclosure of US involvement has added to the Government's dilemma. Although Chilean Foreign Minister Jose Miguel Insulza is lobbying to secure Gen Pinochet's return by claiming the former dictator will face charges relating to torture, deaths and disappearances in Chile, it became clear yesterday the 11 lawsuits against

him are not being pursued with any vigour. Few commentators in Chile believe they will result in Gen Pinochet having to defend himself in court.

The Home Office also seemed lukewarm to Mr Insulza's proposal. A spokesman said the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, would "look closely" at any initiative, but denied a deal had been done.

Downing Street said the issue of extradition was being left to Mr Straw, who has until December 11 to decide whether to allow legal proceedings to start in Britain.

Most experts believe the law lords ruling that Gen Pinochet does not have immunity from prosecution leaves Mr Straw with little room for manoeuvre. Theoretically, the Home Secretary can only let him go home on humanitarian grounds.

Although he is 83 and recently had an operation on his back, Gen Pinochet is not thought to be unwell. Reports yesterday suggested he may leave the Grovelands Priory hospital in Southgate, north London, for a nine-bedroom mansion in Virginia Water, Surrey, within days.



Gen Pinochet: 'no way he could be judged in Chile'

American concern cannot be easily dismissed. The US is sensitive to the future because it sees Latin America as its own backyard and because of lingering embarrassment over the alleged role of the CIA in the fall of President Allende and the rise of Gen Pinochet.

In television interviews yesterday, Mr Insulza pressed the Government to accept a deal to let Gen Pinochet go. Speaking on the BBC's Breakfast with Frost, he said Gen Pinochet might be forced to disclose details of what happened during the coup

and its aftermath if he went back to Chile. "The only real chance to have some kind of justice and some kind of truth is in Chile where the events happened," he said.

Chile does not want Gen Pinochet to face what it regards as a "show trial" in Spain, where he would not be jailed even if he was convicted. Nobody over the age of 75 is imprisoned in Spain.

However, Chile's intentions are bound to be viewed with scepticism by Labour MPs and human rights groups. Appellate Judge Juan Guzman Tapia is currently in the "discovery" stage, a preliminary investigation prior to determining if the charges merit proceeding further.

Martha Lagos, a political analyst in Chile, said: "There is no way Pinochet could be judged in Chile. Who would be brave enough to stick their neck out like that?"

The Foreign Office played down the role of the US and said Mr Cook and Ms Albright had not spoken since the Law Lords delivered their verdict: "If it (the Pinochet issue) cropped up in the past, it was only in passing."

Chile's long search for justice, page 4; Leader comment and Letters, page 9

A time-exposure view of an eruption from the Popocatepetl volcano near Mexico City. The volcano, whose name means the Smoking Mountain, has returned to activity after a period of relative calm and local villages have been put on alert, although seismologists and volcanologists do not expect the eruptions to present any danger. PHOTOGRAPH: DANIEL AGUILAR

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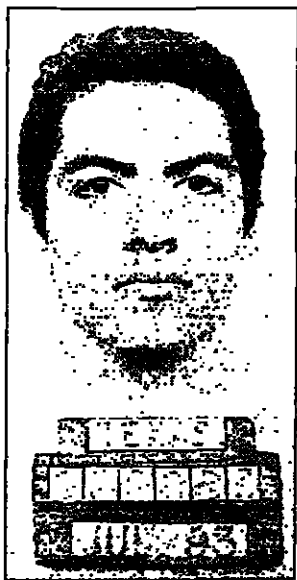
UK news
Swiss voters yesterday rejected a referendum proposal to make their country the first in Europe to legalise all drug consumption. Page 6

International
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'He's a crazy man, a killer, so he'll kill other people. Who would believe someone on death row could escape? Someone inside must have helped'



Dogs search for Martin Gurule (above left), who defied bullets and razor-wire fences in his escape on Friday near Huntsville

Death-row escapee on the run

Texas killer in first jailbreak since Bonnie and Clyde 1934 escapade

Michael Ellison in New York

A DOUBLE killer was still on the run last night after achieving fame of a sort as the first person to escape from death row in Texas since 1934, when Bonnie and Clyde sprang a member of their gang. Bloodhounds, helicopters with night-vision devices and 500 police and state troopers were combing woods surrounding the prison near Huntsville, north of Houston, from which Martin Gurule, aged 29, escaped as guards fired nearly 20 rounds at him.

Six other prisoners tried and failed in the dash for freedom with Gurule, who scaled two razor-wire fences in his escape on Friday night. The last man to break out of the state's death row was Floyd Hamilton, cousin of Clyde Barrow, Bonnie and Clyde, romantically by the 1960s Warren Beatty-Faye Dunaway movie, shot dead two guards and freed him. The mass hunt for Gurule switched for a time to a town four miles west of the prison, where a homeowner fired shots at an intruder, who turned out to be another man. "We've pulled our people back to the original search

area," said Larry Fitzgerald, a Texas prison spokesman. "We're still steadfast and resolved that this guy is here." The woodland is so thick and marshy that the fugitive would have been unable to move quickly. "It's just a matter of time." But the family of one of Gurule's victims, a Corpus Christi restaurant owner, said they feared he had escaped the dragnet. "We don't feel safe," George Piperis, who runs the diner where his brother Mike was shot dead, said. "He's a crazy man and who knows what he'll do next. He's a killer, so he'll kill other people."

Gurule was convicted of the 1992 murder of Mike Piperis and a cook, Anthony Staton, at the U&I restaurant. His girlfriend, Malissa Smith, who had worked at the diner, was jailed for 25 years. Texas, which has executed 17 prisoners this year, has the highest death row population in the United States — 454 — but not the most spartan regime. That accolade goes to Oklahoma, where prisoners are kept in an underground block with concrete furniture and no windows. The inmates are allowed one hour of recreation a day behind left walls. Gurule and the six who tried to break out with him had been on a "work capable" programme, granted for good behaviour, allowing them freedom to leave their cells without direct supervision, eat

meals in a dayroom and have more time for recreation. He was among the one-third of the inmates who work as janitors or in the prison's air-conditioned clothing factory. Video cameras did not record Gurule scaling the razor wire, and internal affairs investigators were trying to work out how he escaped. The prison's death row is officially called Ellis Unit 1, a name borrowed by the country singer Steve Earle to tell the story of a prison officer on the soundtrack of the Tim Robbins film *Dead Man Walking*. Execution dates had not been set for any of the seven, but Gurule had an appeal rejected a year ago. Prison authorities believe the men had been working on their plan for several weeks. They made dummies out of pillows and

Lib Dems to snub Labour on Queen's Speech vote

Ewan MacAskill, Chief Political Correspondent

THE Liberal Democrats will vote against the Queen's Speech tomorrow night in a show of independence from Labour. Paddy Ashdown has come under enormous pressure from within his own party since announcing a fortnight ago broader co-operation with Labour. Some Liberal Democrat MPs and many party activists oppose closer relations.

Liberal Democrat MPs meeting in the Commons last week agreed to vote against the Queen's Speech if the Conservatives pushed it to a division, which Tory Central Office confirmed last night they intend to.

A senior Liberal Democrat MP said: "It could be described as an assertion of separate identity." Mr Ashdown's MPs voted with the Government when it presented its first Queen's Speech after the May 1997 general election. The Liberal Democrats supported many of the measures in that legislative programme, but want to register their disapproval this time over the failure of the Government to include measures close to Lib Dem hearts, such as a freedom of information bill, moves towards a European single currency, and environmental policies, such as investment in public transport.

A Lib Dem spokeswoman disputed the interpretation that the vote marked a signal from disgruntled Liberal Democrat MPs to Mr Ashdown. She insisted it was consistent with remarks by Mr Ashdown after the Queen's Speech last Tuesday when he described it as "mixed".

Although there was no vote recorded at the meeting, MPs

on a show of hands backed the decision to oppose the Queen's Speech. One of the MPs present said: "It was about two to one."

The MP added that the battle lines were confused, and that some of the MPs who had been most vocal in their opposition to expansion of Labour-Liberal Democrat relations a fortnight ago had changed tack. Simon Hughes and Charles Kennedy, both suspicious of closer ties, had voted in favour of backing the Queen's Speech, the MP said.

Lib Dem MP Robert Maclean is expected to warn Tony Blair during the Queen's Speech debate that there will be huge consequences for Labour's credibility and ability to govern if the Tories block the European election bill in the Lords, but also for Labour-Lib Dem relations.

The Labour leadership will be privately relaxed about the vote, whatever criticism Labour MPs and ministers make in public after tomorrow's division. Given its huge majority, it can dismiss the Lib Dem opposition as symbolic.

Mr Blair, too, will recognise that Mr Ashdown has problems in keeping his party together on Labour-Liberal Democrat relations, just as the Prime Minister has in carrying his own party with him.

Mr Ashdown received a boost at the weekend when Liberal Democrats, meeting in Wales to choose a candidate to lead them in the Welsh assembly election, threw out a motion critical of his decision to expand Labour-Liberal Democrat co-operation on a joint cabinet committee.

They were also cool towards proposals for a ballot of members on the Labour-Lib Dem links. The Welsh party decisions were welcomed by the party leadership in London.

A Lib Dem spokeswoman denied a vote against the Queen's Speech would be a signal from disgruntled MPs angry over closer ties with Labour announced by Mr Ashdown.

Brothers die in separate falls from road bridge

Rory Carroll

A YOUNG man plunged to his death from a motorway bridge yesterday just feet from where his brother slipped and died in a similar accident eight weeks ago.

Andrew McKay, aged 21, was sitting on the handrail contemplating his brother when he appeared to overbalance, said relatives.

He died from head injuries sustained in the 33ft fall on to the M6, yards from his home in Riddrie, Glasgow.

Strathclyde police said there were no suspicious circumstances and that it was a tragic, bizarre coincidence. On October 3 David McKay, aged 17, slipped while hanging over the bridge railings to impress his new girlfriend. The brothers' father, Andrew, said they would be buried together. "I just can't

believe this has happened to my family twice, it's horrible." Andy was still grieving badly for his brother. We all were but he just couldn't get over it. It's terrible that he has died the same way." Mr McKay ruled out suicide because his older son had just resumed a relationship with Michelle McAllion, the mother of his children, Morgan, aged three, and Drew, two. "He had his life on track, he was working as a road labourer and he

loved his kids. He wouldn't leave them intentionally." Andrew had been drinking beer at 1am on the steps of his home with Ms McAllion and a friend, Paddy Barnes, aged 20, before he started running up and down the pedestrian bridge. He was sitting on the railings when he fell backwards. Mr Barnes grabbed his sleeve but could not save him. There was no traffic on the road. Mr McKay died a short time later

at Glasgow Royal Infirmary, which also received his brother. A report will be sent to the procurator fiscal. Mr Barnes was detained at the same hospital last night after an epileptic fit. Friends said the brothers had been extremely close. "Andrew was spending a lot of time on that bridge, just standing there where his brother died staring into space. He once spent seven hours there," said John McCrudden.

Andrew dreamed last week that his brother was cuddling him, said his father, who called for motorway bridges to be made safer. "The railings should be higher so it's harder for kids to climb up on them."

Grace and primal vigour amid the cultural contrasts

Review

Tim Ashley

Harry Partch/Elliott Carter

Barbican Hall, London

HARRY PARTCH and Elliott Carter, celebrated at the weekend in consecutive Barbican concerts, are two American composers whose works couldn't be further apart and who embody differing, prevailing trends in 20th-century American culture.

Carter, 90 this year (this was his birthday concert), is a Jamesian figure whose music forms a gracious dialogue with European tradition. Partch, who died in 1974, was the ultimate iconoclast who flung aside the entire Western musical canon and struck out on his own. He famously invented his own instruments — a series of contraptions which were post-modern before their time. Pyrex carboys suspended on ropes mutate into delicate sounding bells; aeroplane fuel tanks are turned into gongs; a massive marimba, called a Boo, is made of 60 bamboo tubes; another

is constructed out of light bulbs. The tuning is often microtonal — one invention, a Chromelodeon, is a reed organ tuned to 43 tones to the octave instead of the usual 12. Partch's legacy has been taken over by composer Dean Drummond and his ensemble Newband, who brought these mythic instruments, as well as Partch's and his own music to the UK for the first time. A colossal crowd was amazed by an end result that seemed almost multimedia, fusing sculpture, installation, performance art and formal concert. Partch's music, full of fiendish rhythms and weird tintin-

ablations, has a primal vigour that sweeps you away. The subject matter is sometimes drawn from Greek mythology: Daphne metamorphosing into a tree; Castor and Pollux, the twins who ascended to the sky to form the constellation Gemini. The latter, combining teasing rhythms with sensual textures, is probably his finest piece. Drummond's music is more reflective, at times erotic. In a Dance Of The Seven Veils, there is an instrument called Juststrokeods — aluminium rods which produce a crystalline twanging sound — which, after the veils have been shed,

the male player fondles suggestively, as the rest of the music sinks into detumescence round it. Elliott Carter was present and on wonderful form at his birthday bash. When he appeared on the podium, he waved his walking stick in the air triumphantly. The programme consisted of some of his finest recent music: The Arditi Quartet played his elusive, difficult 5th String Quartet, then were joined by the pianist Ursula Oppens for the London premiere of his Piano Quintet — a richly ironic, beautifully textured piece in which the pi-

ano's percussive staccato tries (and fails) to undermine the rich lyricism of the strings. After the interval came Carter's Symphonies, the vast orchestral triptych, of which the individual sections have been appearing since 1994. The BBC Symphony Orchestra under Oliver Knussen played as if their lives depended on it. The Symphonies is Carter's masterpiece. Its shattering central movement, the adagio tenebroso, inspired by a visit in the 1920s to the battlefields of the first world war, is like a reflective summary of this violent century.

continued from page 1

After a late breakfast on Sunday morning, they left to visit the Statue of Christ but were prevented from doing so by a traffic jam. They went to Santa Teresa, Rio's equivalent of Montmartre, to visit an art museum and had lunch in a small restaurant. Mr Dowle accompanied Mr Mandelson, who at the time was minister without portfolio, his elevation to the trade department coming the following week, to a reception at 5pm hosted by the Brazilian ambassador to Britain, Rubens Barbosa, at his mother-in-law's home, and at 8pm to a dinner attended by politicians, businessmen and diplomats. They arrived back at Mr

Dowle's home at 1am and Mr Mandelson flew out at 7.30 that morning to Brasilia.

Mr Dowle, who said he continued to enjoy the full confidence of the British Council, said he would extend the same invitation to other politicians that he knew and liked from his days at Westminster. He described references to Mr de Silva, who had been dubbed "Fabulous Fabricio", as untrue and libellous. His partner was a respected journalist who spoke five languages.

Punch is owned by Mohamed Al Fayed, who also owns Harrods. Mr Dowle and Mr Mandelson discussed suing the magazine but decided against in order not to give it more publicity.

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Det Supt Ray Mallon, one of eight suspended officers, has still not been interviewed by the Police Complaints Authority, a year after he was forced off the job. PHOTOGRAPH: TONY BARTHOLOMEW

'I will never retire on medical grounds. I would rather be sacked'

EXACTLY a year ago it all went badly wrong for Superintendent Ray Mallon. The man who had achieved celebrity as Britain's toughest cop was suspended for allegedly leaking information relating to a wide-ranging corruption inquiry into the Cleveland police force, and for engaging in "alleged activity which could be construed as criminal conduct". He strenuously denies any wrongdoing, writes Peter Hetherington.

With mystery surrounding his abrupt removal, supporters quickly gathered a 30,000-signature petition calling for his reinstatement — and the man himself developed a sideline as a weekly columnist for the Northern Echo.

One year on, he has still not been interviewed by a Police Complaints Authority-supervised inquiry, which has widened its remit to include allegations of "corruption and malpractice" within the Cleveland force. Earlier this month, after another eight-month internal inquiry, Mr Mallon was cleared of fiddling his expenses but rapped over the knuckles about his paperwork.

Asked why it had taken so long to interview him, the PCA would only say: "Senior officers are normally interviewed towards the end of an investigation." Speaking at length for the first time since his suspen-

sion, Mr Mallon was in little mood for compromise. "There are people who have tried to fuel scurrilous stories and I will not forgive them... I know who they are and when the time is right those people will answer."

He is determined to return as a superintendent, if not to his old job. "Some things in life are non-negotiable and this is one of them. I will never retire on medical grounds. I would rather be sacked than retire on medical grounds. But I'll not be sacked. I'll be there as long as it takes."

"Initially I am fighting to be reinstated to Cleveland Police, where I should be, and when I'm reinstated then together with a lot of other people (I) will lobby the chief constable (Barry Shaw) to place me back in my old job. Why should I suffer when I've done nothing wrong?"

He claims "massive" support from the rank and file of the force, and says he has conducted his own investigation into the circumstances surrounding his suspension. "I've spoken to many people and absorbed masses of information and [the PCA inquiry] only knows half the story. I've just sat there and let people ring me and tell me everything they know... I've been very busy and got more than a reasonable explanation for everything."

Cleveland police inquiry widens

46 officers under investigation for corruption and alleged supply of drugs in return for confessions

Peter Hetherington

AN INQUIRY into allegations that two detectives supplied heroin to gain confessions in the Middlesbrough area has expanded into the biggest investigation currently under way by the Police Complaints Authority.

More than a year after the two were suspended from the Cleveland force, 46 officers are under investigation and more than 300 separate complaints have been made, the Guardian has learned.

Under the direction of the Chief Constable of Warwickshire, Andrew Timpon, 35 officers — mainly from Cleveland — are examining allegations of "corruption

and malpractice" within the force, and the alleged supply of drugs for confessions.

The force has also been beset by a string of other problems — most recently the use of its sports and social club mini-bus on duty-free runs to Calais. Cheap drink was then allegedly sold at police headquarters. Two detectives have been reprimanded and fined £1,000 by Customs and Excise.

The PCA said its inquiry had so far led to the suspension of eight officers, including Det Supt Ray Mallon, the former head of Middlesbrough CID. A year after he was sus-

pended on full pay, he has yet to be interviewed by the inquiry and is demanding his job back. His case has been taken up by the Police Superintendents' Association.

The PCA said the inquiry, believed to cost £1.5 million so far, had been widened after new allegations were made. "A very serious picture is emerging," a spokesman said.

With little sign of it drawing to a close, concern about costs are rising. Lord MacKenzie, a Labour peer and former president of the Superintendents' Association, is said to have voiced serious concerns to the Home Office.

Stung by criticism surrounding the cost and conduct of the inquiry, the PCA said: "There are people who are interested in undermining the investigation and we are sick of it."

Some criticism has surrounded the PCA's appointment last year of Chief Supt Kevin Pitt, a former close colleague of Ray Mallon, as chief investigating officer under Mr Timpon. Critics are also unhappy with the large number of Cleveland officers involved in investigating the conduct of colleagues.

But the PCA responded: "We have no doubts about Kevin Pitt's suitability. We have been criticised on cost grounds, but the cost would be very much higher if 29 officers were brought in from outside." However, six officers from Northamptonshire, Mr Timpon's former force, are part of the inquiry team. After the initial suspensions, Richard Brunstrom, an assistant chief constable in Cleveland, said the force had the fullest confidence in Mr Mallon. Mr Mallon, who claimed he was brought in to clean up the force, said he had found discipline, called in about 50 officers and told them: "It ends here, it ends now... Any off-

icer who goes outside the rules will not be supported."

But unsigned letters expressing concern, believed to be from a senior police officer, have been sent to people in the area. The letters have complained of "unfair pressure" being placed on officers to "get results", and of others being afraid to come forward with evidence to the PCA inquiry.

One letter suggested that an officer who offered to co-operate with the inquiry had his car sprayed with the word "grass" and was subsequently threatened. The Cleveland force has

been beset by problems since the two detectives were suspended in October last year in the drugs-for-confessions affair, which led to several Crown Court cases being thrown out because police evidence was found to be unsafe.

Last year two officers were jailed for assaulting a man in an off-duty night club brawl. And a month ago, the force had to discipline two officers taking the social club mini-bus on 12 trips to France for cut-price drink.

The PCA will neither admit nor deny that members of the inquiry team were involved in buying the drink.

Saddam's brother returns home

David Sharrock
Middle East Correspondent

THE half-brother of President Saddam Hussein of Iraq was reported to be returning to Baghdad last night, ending months of speculation that he was on the verge of defecting.

Barzan al-Tikriti, the former Iraqi ambassador to the United Nations' European headquarters, flew from Geneva to Amman yesterday, telling eyewitnesses quoted by Reuters news agency that he was going to Baghdad. He is widely believed to be on bad terms with President Saddam's son Uday, who may have had a role in terminating Mr Barzan's Geneva position in August.

In an interview with the Saudi newspaper Asharq al-Awsat last month, Mr Barzan hinted that his replacement in Geneva, a protégé of Uday, was not sufficiently qualified. Mr

Barzan has openly opposed the grooming of Uday as President Saddam's successor.

Uday is said by Iraqi exiles to have been linked to the murder of two other relatives, General Hussein Kamel al-Majid and the general's brother, Colonel Saddam Kamel, only a few days after they returned to Baghdad, three years ago. They had been pardoned for seeking asylum abroad.

However, unlike Kamel, who had revealed details of President Saddam's military programme and threatened to topple him, Mr Barzan has remained loyal. In recent interviews he stressed that he was only staying in Geneva as his wife was in hospital suffering from a particularly virulent form of cancer. Last week he buried her.

But while Mr Barzan may have received assurances that he is safe to return to Iraq, it seems clear he was reluctant to leave Geneva.

The defections of Kamel



Barzan al-Tikriti: Opposed grooming of Saddam's son

and his brother were sparked when Uday shot a cousin during a row over an Italian sports car, according to press reports at the time. Kamel feared Uday had become dangerously unpredictable, and that he and his brother might be the next victims.

President Saddam later

punished his son by setting fire to a garage where Uday kept a collection of sports cars. He was incensed by the defections, even more so when Kamel began calling for his overthrow and fed details of Iraq's chemical and nuclear programmes to the United States.

Meanwhile an Iraqi opposition leader said President Bill Clinton's plan to give Iraqi dissidents more than \$60 million to topple President Saddam will not succeed, because more than money is needed to oust him.

Changing the regime "needs real efforts from inside Iraq, and co-operation among the army, tribal people and the effective Sunni, Shi'ite and Kurdish powers," Mohammed Baghi al-Bakr, leader of an Iranian-based Shi'ite Muslim group called the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, was quoted as saying in the Arabic daily Al-Raya yesterday.

Folkestone lit for first Joyeux Noël

John Ezzard

THE FIRST hint of a Gallic takeover came when Eurotunnel began advertising the vehicle shuttle service which starts at Folkestone as it shuttles.

Yesterday it was announced that the town's civic Christmas is effectively turning into Noël. France is to take over organising it for the historic but financially embarrassed Kent port at a bargain price.

Tomorrow 14 French

council workmen will cross to their twin town from Boulogne bearing four truckloads of gifts. These include six 20 foot-high Christmas trees laden with artificial snow, woodland sprays painted white and gold, garlands, coloured balls and white fairy lights.

They will festoon Folkestone civic centre and main shopping street in a scheme designed by Boulogne council's head of parks and gardens, Louis Djalaï.

In confirmation that things are cheaper across the Channel, they will do it for £7,000 in contrast to the

£45,000 Folkestone would have needed for the job.

In Folkestone, this setback for chauvinism is being treated as a triumph for *amitié cordiale*. "I believe we have got a bargain," its French-born town centre manager, Philippe Esclasse, said yesterday. "We will be able to use the lights and some of the painted sprays again next year."

The move follows several disappointing festive seasons during which the Kent town's lights and decorations have been criticised as amateurish and feeble.

This year it managed to get only £5,000 from Shepway district council of the £45,000 it wanted in grants. The town centre management committee stumped up another £2,000. Mr Esclasse mentioned the problem to Mr Djalaï. Boulogne won a prize last year as best decorated town in northern France.

"To my surprise he agreed to help," Mr Esclasse said. "It is clear from his designs that we are getting real flair — the visual creation of a real artist. As they say in France, it will be a Joyeux Noël."

But at Block 4, there was a quiet, terrible reality. In a stark room, human hair is piled up like a mountain. Shaven from Jews as they were led to gas chambers, much of it grey now, turned so by time. But I searched for a trace of red or colour, as one looks for some reminder that one's family was here. Alex Brummer visits the killing fields of Auschwitz

G2 cover story

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DNA embryo test to wipe out defects

Sarah Hall

A HIGHLY-sensitive DNA test — hailed as a scientific breakthrough — has been developed to prevent chromosomally abnormal embryos from being used during fertility treatment.

The new technique will reveal almost every genetic disorder, and so ensure defective embryos are not implanted.

The chances of conception should then increase and the risk of miscarriage be reduced. At present, half of all embryos used in IVF treatment are chromosomally abnormal, and just one in four result in pregnancy.

The technique — which was immediately condemned by pro-life campaigners as "pure eugenics" — differs from current, pre-implantation screening in that it can test up to 10 chromosomes, instead of only two.

Ian Findlay, the molecular biologist who developed it, said: "This essentially extends the range of diagnostic tests we can do on embryos. At the moment, we can only test for gender, Down's syndrome and a few single gene disorders such as cystic fibrosis. By looking at 10 chromosomes, we can test for almost any genetic disorder, and we'll be able to look at a whole range at the same time."

The single-cell test — which should be available within the year — also breaks new ground in providing a "genetic fingerprint" for the embryo, ensuring it is this, and not the mother's genes or contamination in the test tube, which is being screened.

Developed along the same lines as conventional DNA testing, but 1,000 times more sensitive, it allows scientists to confirm their diagnosis on the day of testing. "With current techniques, you only have one shot, but here we

can do the test on the same cell five or six times and so be much more sure of our diagnosis," Dr Findlay, of Leeds University, said.

He added that, in the future, it could also be applied to pregnant women, enabling embryos to be screened through a blood sample taken from the mother.

Women could then learn if the embryo had Down's syndrome, or other chromosomal disorders, at a far earlier stage than the 14-16 weeks at which an amniocentesis test is taken, and swift results would ensure they did not have to wait the present two or three weeks for diagnosis.

Geeta Margund, head of the Diana Princess of Wales Centre for Reproductive Medicine at St George's Hospital, in Tooting, south London, which hopes to use the test as soon as it is validated, described it as "a real breakthrough in trying to pick healthy embryos".

She added: "At present, a significant number of IVF embryos — up to 50 per cent — are chromosomally abnormal and that's a major reason for failure of conception or early miscarriage."

But Josephine Quintavalle, of the pressure group Comment on Reproductive Ethics, said: "This is pure eugenics. The whole concept of grading embryos is appalling. The technique may be absolutely brilliant, but they're doing nothing but destroying. It's a search-and-kill technique."

Dr Findlay, who developed the test after working with the forensic science service, insisted: "All we are doing is giving patients a choice because there are many mothers out there who could not cope with having an affected child."

He said the test could have a very late abortion at 20 weeks. Discovering an abnormality when the embryo is just three days old, and before it has been implanted in the mother, will be much less traumatic.

Care reforms backlash threat

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

MINISTERS are being warned they risk a backlash if they take too much power from local government in measures due out today to tighten controls on social services.

Local authority leaders say they must be allowed continued discretion over services and are not prepared to be "just an arm of the central state".

The warning comes ahead of the publication today of the long-awaited social services white paper, which will set out a new inspection system for nursing, child care and domestic care and will start the process of regulating social care workers.

The document will also lay down a clear framework of performance standards for social services departments, linking funding to achievement of benchmarks in areas such as the welfare of children in care.

Most of the proposals have been trailed in advance, or even detailed in earlier papers. But local councils will be studying how far the overall balance of power shifts from town hall to Whitehall.

John Ransford, the designate head of health and social care at the Local Government Association, said: "We have no problem at all with

national standards and a national strategy, but our big concern is that they must be delivered in a way that fits in with local authorities' arrangements. If the style of the strategy is over-centralised, that will be unfortunate."

The Government has much stronger centralising instincts than the Conservative administration, he believed. Councils would have to submit plans for improving social care, approval of which would be a condition of funding.

"What we don't want to be is just an arm of the central state such as health authorities," said Mr Ransford, the chief executive of North Yorkshire county council. "We don't want to be local administration, we want to be local government."

Under the white paper plans, inspection of care services will be taken from local and health authorities and put in the hands of a new, regional inspectorate.

Ministers will also move towards fulfilling their commitment to set up a social care council to regulate care workers. The process is expected to begin with qualified social workers, extending later to others among the million-strong workforce.

As there are no plans for legislation on the white paper, it will be at least two years before any of the statutory changes take effect.

Mandelson seeks to put mergers out of politics

Nicholas Watt, Political Correspondent

PETER Mandelson is taking steps to distance himself from the highly sensitive area of company mergers after the future over BSkyB's £22 million bid for Manchester United. Stung by criticism over his role in the proposed takeover, the Trade and Industry Secretary has ordered his officials to draw up a paper which will examine ways of placing decisions outside the political arena.

Mr Mandelson, who recently referred the BSkyB bid to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, says he wants the whole issue to be put under a "microscope" to ensure that mergers are seen to be dealt with fairly.

He will publish a green paper in January which will recommend a series of options for reforming his untrammeled powers over mergers. Under the present system the director general of the Office of Fair Trading (OFT)

advises the Trade and Industry Secretary whether to refer a large merger to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, something Mr Mandelson can ignore. If the merger goes to the commission Mr Mandelson is also free to ignore its recommendation unless it advises that a merger should go ahead without conditions.

Mr Mandelson said his instinct was to take decisions about mergers away from politicians who often face criticism for showing favouritism to business friends. "I want to put everything under the microscope," he said. "I want to test whether the way we do things is the best we can do."

After reading two hefty volumes on mergers, however, Mr Mandelson said he did not want to rush because it was a highly complex issue. He had thought it would be more clear cut.

Even if mergers were taken out of the hands of politicians there would be certain areas where the public would expect the Trade and Industry Secretary to have the final say.



Photographs by John Benton-Harris are among the works from the Arts Council collection on show at the Marriott Hotel

PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN GODWIN

National art works leased to hotel

Dan Glaister reports on unease caused by a new departure for the Arts Council

An invitation to the public: rarely seen works by well known artists, on show at the former home of London democracy. Admission free. Open 24 hours.

VISITORS to the Marriott Hotel at County Hall on the South Bank of the Thames will doubtless be thrilled by its pictures.

In reception are three drawings by David Hockney; a little further along, two drawings by Walter Sickert; on the fifth floor, inside the health spa, a collection of black and white photographs. In the bars and restaurants of the hotel a collection of art is displayed, a considerable boon to the hotel's marketing.

The works are on a five-year loan from the Arts Council collection, one of the biggest in the country, with 7,000 works kept for the nation to be displayed in public places.

A spokeswoman for the centre said: "The hotel is a public building. You can go in there and have a cup of tea; they have a bar and a restaurant. As long as curatorial standards are satisfied, we are happy to lend to them."

Would the Marriott welcome the homeless on Charing Cross Bridge if they wanted to see the collection? There was no response. They also argue that the loan is part of a move to raise the profile of the arts in a regenerated South Bank, home to the Royal National Theatre and the SBC, which includes the Royal Festival Hall, the Hayward Gallery and the Queen Elizabeth Hall. However, other nearby institutions, including St Thomas's Hospital and Waterloo Station, both arguably more open to the public than the Marriott Hotel, have not been offered the Arts Council's curatorial spirit.

John Benton-Harris, a photographer who has six photographs on show at the Marriott, has objected to what he sees as the exploitation of his work by the South Bank Cen-

tre and the Arts Council for commercial gain. In correspondence with the centre, he points out that the arrangement is not in the spirit of the work of the Arts Council collection. A visit to the hotel confirmed his reservations about the accessibility of the work.

"There is no signage in the hotel to direct the public to these images," he wrote, "and I was stopped several times by members of the hotel staff. It took me about 40 minutes to find out where my work was displayed. Eventually I discovered it, more by luck than anything else, behind large frosted glass doors in the reception area of the gym, on the fifth floor."

The SBC and the Arts Council also argue that in these cash-strapped times for the arts, it is incumbent upon organisations to maximise their earning potential.

This too cuts little ice with Mr Benton-Harris. "What I object to," he writes, "is the blatant commercialising of the collection for profit, for whatever reason, without first consulting the artists or their estates, and making a fair financial provision for all the artists involved."

Susan Ferleger-Brades, director of the Hayward Gallery, the wing of the SBC responsible for the collection, has offered to remove Benton-Harris's work from the display and place it in a more appropriate venue.

The photographer, however, writes that he is not opposed to commercial arrangements on principle. "I am grateful, and that gratitude I will express in the percentage I allow the Arts Council to retain from the making of this deal."

But the Arts Council would not reveal how much money was involved in the loan.

Mr Benton-Harris feels the Arts Council has let artists down. "I feel, at this moment, the best thing you could do for me and the arts, is nothing at all."

Fast track to top pay for elite among trainee teachers

Rebecca Smithers

AN ELITE group of trainee teachers will be given fast-track promotion and higher pay under government proposals to be published later this week.

The Education and Employment Secretary, David Blunkett, will announce a £20 million fund to reward a thousand selected trainees every year who will be taught in a variety of schools and through placement in industry. They will be given the chance to leap from a starting £15,000 to £22,500 within four years, compared with up to

seven years at the moment. Some two thirds never rise beyond this ceiling.

Thursday's green paper on the future of the teaching profession will contain radical proposals to raise standards by offering greater rewards for talented staff and top-performing schools.

At the heart of the document are controversial plans to introduce performance-related pay for teachers — an idea strongly resisted by the teachers' unions, which have threatened industrial action. Yesterday Mr Blunkett insisted that the proposals would not block the Government's main aim of modernising the profession. "We are speaking on behalf of parents and the country as a whole. We aren't going to let anybody block the radical changes we are bringing in."

"Can you imagine a trade union asking its members to come out on strike on the premise that many of its members will be paid more?"

Speaking on BBC TV's Breakfast with Frost programme, Mr Blunkett fleshed out details of the fast-track scheme.

The proposals would mirror the graduate traineeships already offered by the Civil Service to attract the brightest graduates.

After rigorous selection, high-flying graduates would be offered accelerated promotion, climbing the pay scale within four or five years, and then qualify for the new grade of advanced skills teacher, or leadership positions. The scheme could be piloted from next September before a national launch, backed by the £20 million fund over the first three years. Yesterday the biggest teachers' union, the National Union of Teachers, rejected the proposal as "an insult to the vast majority of teachers."

"Selecting a privileged few will not deal with the problems which the profession

faces. The NUT is also opposed to any pay structure linking pay with performance."

Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of School Masters/Union of Women Teachers, said: "We need a decent deal to motivate the many and not the few."

Mr Blunkett said the big challenge facing the Government in the green paper was the introduction of a new set of three Rs into the education system: "Recruitment, retention and rewarding good teachers."

He ruled out tinkering with the school year in order to

shorten the long summer holiday.

Other proposals which are expected to feature in the green paper include:

• Bigger rewards for head teachers, with salaries of up to £70,000 and better training through a national college of school leadership;

• Bonus payments for schools according to their results;

• A strong culture of personal development for teachers;

• And better support in the classroom, including an extra 20,000 qualified teaching assistants over the next three years.

Sex abuse risk of poor children

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

PAEDOPHILES often seek out victims from deprived backgrounds because they are more vulnerable and less likely to be seen as credible witnesses, according to a study by the NSPCC.

Children from ethnic minority groups may be especially at risk because of language difficulties, sexual taboos and deference to professionals.

The study is based on 20 cases of "complex" organised sex abuse in London. Its recommendations represent the first good-practice guide for those investigating such abuse.

In one case, a paedophile ring of five men and a woman preyed on children on a poor estate, "grooming" them with sweets, money, toys, alcohol, pornography — and, most significantly, attention.

All six were jailed, though only after a series of trials. In a second case, however, a middle-class man strongly suspected of abusing boys from poor backgrounds was never brought to trial.

The man would tour working-class districts in search of boys whom he would cultivate and organise in a self-policing hierarchy headed by a "top dog".

Many such victims had a history of trouble with the authorities, making them less likely to betray abusers and less likely to be taken seriously by police and courts.

In three of the cases there was evidence that abusers had focused on children from ethnic minorities. Assumptions included a lesser likelihood of sex being discussed within their families and a greater reluctance to make abuse allegations against professionals.

Jim Harding, NSPCC director, said: "Organised abusers are single-minded and relentless in their abuse of children. We all need guidance on this pressing issue. We have to have a more organised response to organised abuse."

The study, called *Grappling with Abuse*, says much organised abuse is often detected only by accident.

Demo backs hunger strike

Sarah Hall

MORE than 300 animal rights campaigners demonstrated yesterday outside a farm housing monkeys allegedly used for vivisection.

The protest was also in support of Barry Horne, who has been transferred to hospital from prison while on the 55th day of a hunger strike aimed at pressuring the Government to set up a royal commission to investigate vivisection.

Surrounded by police in the West Sussex village of Small Dole, supporters of Save the Sharnock Monkeys (Sharnock being the firm involved) waved banners linking their cause to Horne, given an 18-year sentence last year for arson costing £3 million.

The Home Office, which last week announced an immediate ban on the use of animals for testing cosmetics, has said it was "not prepared to allow policy to be dictated by blackmail".

Chile's long search for justice

Elizabeth Love in Santiago

AN UNDERTAKING to process 11 lawsuits lodged in Chile against Augusto Pinochet for torture, killings and disappearances during his regime is a victory of sorts for his opponents.

In the past, civil judges passed such cases to the military courts which promptly dismissed them, arguing they fell under an amnesty enacted by the general's regime in 1978. The cases will inch their way through the legal system, but few expect to ever see the former dictator in the dock.

An appellate judge, Juan Guzman Tapia, is currently in the "discovery" stage of the 11 suits, an investigation made prior to determining if the charges merit proceeding with. He said in December he would try to interview General Pinochet, but his remark was made in the immediate aftermath of Gen Pinochet's arrest in London.

"Why is a badly paid judge going to be able to do what the whole Chilean population hasn't been able to do for the past 10 years?" asked a political analyst, Martha Lagos, referring to the decade that has passed since Gen Pinochet stepped down as president.

The first of the 11 cases was lodged by the president of the Chilean Communist Party, Gladys Marin, for the disappearance of her husband, Jorge, following the coup that brought Gen Pinochet to



Animal rights activists in Sussex yesterday show their support for hunger striker Barry Horne

PHOTOGRAPH: TIM DICKENSON

power in 1973. Where the fate of one of the "disappeared" remains unknown, Chilean law allows judges to investigate the cases as "kidnappings" — the amnesty not being applied until a body is found or the circumstances of death are ascertained. Others of the 11 cases refer to the so-called "Caravan of Death" on which leftists were executed in northern Chile following the coup.

The arrest in London stunned large segments of the Chilean population that had long believed the former dictator was untouchable. The specific immunity given to him as a life senator, a position he created for himself in the 1980 Constitution, was justified as the price of a peace-

ful transition to democracy. "There's a lot of hope about what is going on in London but a little shame that in their own country they're not able to get justice," said Edwina Menta, a nun who works in Chile's poor neighbourhoods.

If the appellate judge decided the suits should proceed, he would then, to go further, have to begin the process of revoking the legal protection Gen Pinochet has as a senator. Since Chilean law is based on the Napoleonic code, arguments are made in documents and not verbally in an open court, prolonging the time involved in reaching a decision.

Even if the cases did proceed, Gen Pinochet could claim protection under the

1978 amnesty, or under a 20-year statute of limitations on crimes such as murder. "This [process] could take 11 years or more, until he is long dead," said Ms Lagos.

Yet Chile's rightist political parties vehemently argue Gen Pinochet should be tried in Chile if he were to be tried at all, may have to back up their words with action. "If Pinochet returns to Chile, there is a debt owed by the right to see he is judged here," said Teresa Valdes, assistant director of the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences.

The Chilean supreme court recently rejected a government request that a special judge be appointed to handle the Pinochet lawsuits.

Ex-Re
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lifetime

Ex-Red Arrows leader killed in plane crash

GU 38/11

Israel faces dilemma on Lebanon occupation

David Sharrock in Jerusalem

ISRAELI planes and artillery attacked suspected Hizbullah sites in south Lebanon yesterday as the cabinet reviewed ways to respond to the increasing toll of its soldiers in the zone Israel occupies to protect its northern flank.

Several ministers called for military strikes on Beirut's power and water supplies in retaliation for the killing of four Israeli soldiers by Hizbullah last week. Seven have died in 11 days.

The cabinet security committee met after the prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, returned from visiting wounded soldiers in the north. "We are looking for an arrangement in which we can achieve that objective of protecting northern Israel without our presence in Lebanon," Mr Netanyahu said. He added that the cabinet would discuss minimising its casualties, not withdrawing its troops.

The foreign minister, Ariel Sharon, has proposed a phased withdrawal, offset by punitive counter-raids if Hizbullah attacks.

He is supported by at least two ministers, according to Hebrew newspapers, but military chiefs oppose him. Public opinion is swinging further away from staying in south Lebanon.

"Israel wants peace negotiations with Syria... but we cannot link negotiations with Syria with what is happening in Lebanon," Mr Sharon said. Damascus wants back the strategic Golan Heights, which Israel captured in the 1967 Middle East war, and has little interest in reducing the pressure on Israeli forces in Lebanon by reining in Hizbullah.

Asked whether he believed

that Israel could get out of its Lebanon quagmire without Syrian involvement, Mr Netanyahu said: "We will discuss this in the cabinet. I can say one thing: we know Syria's involvement and responsibility." Washington has urged Israel and Lebanon to "show maximum restraint".

Mr Netanyahu confirmed his willingness to withdraw,

provided the Lebanese army was deployed to prevent Hizbullah incursions into Israel, but he said Israel would continue to fight Hizbullah in the nine-mile-deep zone until a deal was signed.

Talks between Israel and Syria on the future of the Golan have been frozen for nearly three years. In April Israel accepted the 1978

United Nations resolution requiring it to withdraw from Lebanon but said it required Lebanese guarantees about Hizbullah and the safeguarding of its militia allies, the South Lebanese Army. Syria and Lebanon say an Israeli withdrawal must be unconditional.

Yesterday two Israeli planes fired rockets at sus-

pected positions of Hizbullah and Syrian-backed Amal fighters in the Arisha region, near the occupied zone. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

Security sources said Israeli forces had earlier shelled the Hizbullah stronghold of Iqlim al-Toufah and areas east of the occupation zone. On Saturday Israeli ar-

tillery hit a derelict army barracks near the southern town of Nabatieh.

The 1996 "Grapes of Wrath" operation was Israel's last big offensive in Lebanon. More than 100 civilians were killed in the 17-day blitz when Israeli shells hit a UN refugee camp in Qana.

"Sometimes we win some, and sometimes the enemy

does. With the grace of Allah, we've managed to jump ahead of Israel's sophisticated security this time," a senior Hizbullah official, Hussein Khalil, said in Beirut.

"We've managed to put them in their place. We've taught them a lesson. Israelis don't pay attention to their daily crimes against Lebanon or repent, until they get lessons."

Israeli women lobby the prime minister's office in Jerusalem yesterday, urging the withdrawal of troops from south Lebanon. Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon (above) proposes a phased pullout but other ministers want retaliatory attacks on Lebanese infrastructure

MAN PHOTOGRAPH BY EVAN WARSHAWSKY



A victory garrison for Sonia Gandhi as her supporters celebrate in New Delhi, where the Congress party regained control of the state assembly in the first test of public opinion since the Hindu nationalist BJP took power at the federal level in March

India puts Hindu party on notice

Suzanne Goldenberg in New Delhi

THE Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party, which came to power in India eight months ago promising clean government, had its claims roundly rejected by voters at the weekend, when it suffered a stunning defeat in state assembly elections in four states.

The opposition Congress party captured two-thirds of the seats in the Delhi legislative assembly, which the BJP controlled, and scored an even more dramatic victory by dislodging the BJP in the desert state of Rajasthan.

Congress retained its control of the central state of Madhya Pradesh, but lost the tiny north-eastern state of Mizoram to a regional party.

"They came up with great

dreams and large hopes and great promises, and none of them has been fulfilled," said Shriela Dixit, the local Congress leader, as party activists danced through the streets of New Delhi.

The results were seen as a triumph for the Italian-born Congress party president Sonia Gandhi, the widow of its assassinated one-time leader.

They are certain to embolden those of her followers who are anxious to hasten the collapse of the eight-month-old BJP coalition.

Ms Gandhi said last night: "I feel the message is quite clear. We have gained a lot of strength."

Although Ms Gandhi has advocated patience and asked Congress to wait for the BJP to succumb to internal feuds and wrangling in its coalition of nearly 20 parties, many of



Prime Minister Vajpayee: Unfulfilled promises

her followers do not share her patience. The party has ruled India for most of the 51 years since independence, and it has not taken easily to a spell in opposition.

Ms Gandhi told the Star television network that her

party would not seek an immediate vote of confidence when parliament reopens today.

"We ought not to rush into sudden situations. I wouldn't like to do so."

Despite Ms Gandhi's reluctance to try to form yet another unstable coalition, or to precipitate the third election in less than three years, the pressure on the BJP is bound to intensify.

The BJP prime minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, admitted that the voters seemed to want a change, but said the results would have no bearing on the stability of his coalition.

But the recriminations were under way last night as its allies blamed the BJP for failing to appreciate the public's anger at rising food prices.

Although the BJP tried to appeal to national pride by

claiming credit for the nuclear tests conducted in Rajasthan in May, the voters had a much more prosaic concern: the price of food staples such as onions and potatoes, which increased eightfold in the weeks before the elections.

"This is a verdict of the people. There were problems that could have been avoided," said Atal Parja of the Trinamul Congress, which has been supporting the BJP.

"We warned that price rises are going to touch the public. We are alarmed to see that a government running a coalition is not taking care of the allies."

Mr Vajpayee is also expected to come under increasing pressure from hardliners in his own party who in recent months have coalesced around the home minister, L. K. Advani.

Shock at police acquittal

THE trial of 10 policemen charged with murdering 21 Rio de Janeiro dwellers ended in disappointment for human rights observers at the weekend, when all the defendants were acquitted.

In 1993 20 hooded gunmen killed 21 people, including two children and eight members of one family, when they opened fire on residents of the Vigario Geral slum.

It was one of the bloodiest episodes of recent years in Brazil and focused international attention on police violence in Rio de Janeiro, where official statistics show that, on average, more than one person a day is killed by serving police.

Only two of the 52 policemen originally charged with the massacre have been convicted, in trials last year. Charges against six others were dropped owing to lack of evidence. No trial date has been set for the other suspects.

Ignacio Cano, a researcher at Rio's Higher Institute for Religious Studies, said the acquittals were not surprising as he was unaware of any convictions of military police in recent years. All but one of the defendants were military police.

He said: "Most cases don't

even come to trial. However, the fact that this case has come so far and at least a few policemen have been sentenced shows that [the justice system] is far better than it was. But [Brazil] has still got a long way to go. The degree of impunity here is still so high."

The state of Rio de Janeiro is one of the most violent in the world, with 8,000 murders a year among a population of 13 million. So far this year police have admitted killing about 60 people a month, though Human Rights Watch estimates there could be as many as 3,000 killings by police a year. This compares with an average of 30 police killings a year in New York.

The rate of police killings doubled four years ago after the state introduced "bravery awards" — cash incentives and promotion — for police involved in shoot-outs. The awards were stopped this year under pressure from human rights organisations.

The culture of violence is rooted in the vast social inequalities within the city of Rio, where hundreds of thousands of people live in extreme poverty in shantytowns favelas, which are often controlled by armed drug gangs.

There is a belief among

many police chiefs that violence must be fought with violence. Officers, who are poorly trained and whose wages are only \$50 a week, have been seen to be easily corruptible. Many are involved with organised crime.

The Vigario Geral massacre is widely thought to have been an act of revenge for the killing of four policemen the previous night in an ambush by drug traffickers from the favela in Rio's North Zone.

The key evidence was taped conversations inside a jail, in which other defendants said the 10 were not involved. Television showed the verdict, announced by the presiding judge Jose Geraldo Antonio, being greeted by utter disbelief from victims' relatives.

Vera Dias Carneiro, president of the Association of Relatives of the Victims of Violence, said the result was a shock for the victims' families. "The tapes, presented as proof, were obviously fabricated," she said.

Rubem Cesar Fernandes, co-ordinator of the charity Viva Rio, said: "The prevailing belief was that the defendants would be convicted. Whoever goes to Vigario Geral today knows that the drama there hasn't ended."

Ex-coup leader leads poll race with 'Third Way' for Venezuela

Christina Hoag in Caracas

FOR millions of poor Venezuelans, Hugo Chávez promises to be a saviour. To investors eager to capitalise on the country's mineral resources and vast oil reserves, he is a threat.

Mr Chávez, a former paratrooper lieutenant-colonel who led a coup attempt in 1992, is the frontrunner in the race for Venezuela's presidential election on December 6.

He is a man of nationalistic and populist rhetoric, who delights the 76 per cent of Venezuelans who live in poverty while angering the elite.

Mr Chávez, who has a 50 per cent rating in the polls, promises to make the country if elected. He plans to dissolve congress, write a new constitution, review privatisation contracts and tighten control over the country's primary source of income, the world's second biggest oil company, state-owned Petroleos de Venezuela.

With his militaristic red beret that has become his supporters' trademark, Mr Chávez delivers his message to packed rallies: "This is the revolution of the end of the century. We want to take the government out of the hands of the corrupt and put it in the hands of the people."

Mr Chávez says radical changes are needed to wipe out the money-grabbing politicians who have prevented the vast oil wealth from benefiting the people.

For Venezuelans who have seen their standard of living plummet during the past 15 years his message hits home. "There's a lot of money here, but it's in the hands of few," Alfredo Ramirez, an army reservist, said.

The business community, which favours the second place candidate, the Yale-educated economist and former state governor Henrique Salas Romero, does not think so. Some claim Mr Chávez plans to install himself as a dictator.

Others point to his statements about suspending payments on

the \$22 billion (\$13 billion) foreign debt.

Mr Chávez's popularity has soared since the former independent frontrunner Irene Sáez accepted the endorsement of the Social Christian Party. The former Miss Universe and mayor of a Caracas district has seen her support drop from 38 per cent to 2 per cent because of resentment towards the traditional parties.

In a television interview this week she said: "I have had to pay a high price for the endorsement."

Yesterday leaders of the centrist Democratic Action dumped their presidential candidate, Luis Alfaro Uzcero, and switched support to Mr Salas Romero in a last-ditch attempt to stop Mr Chávez.

Mr Chávez has had to tone down his extremism to lure moderates whose support he needs to win. Dressing in smart business suits, he says that he is modelling himself on Tony Blair, seeking a Third Way between brutal neo-liberalism and hardline socialism.

Swiss voters say No to drugs free-for-all

Peter Capella in Geneva

SWISS voters yesterday heeded government advice to reject overwhelmingly a referendum proposal to make their country the first in Europe to legalise all drug consumption.

Despite Switzerland's pioneering policy on drugs, 73.9 per cent voted against the initiative, known as Droleq, which would also have obliged the Swiss authorities to take control of the drugs market by licensing the sale of narcotics within three years.

It would have outlawed drug advertising and taxed hard and soft drugs, with revenues invested in drug prevention and drug abuse programmes. Droleq's initiators, a loose coalition of leftwing groups and hemp growers, had campaigned for four years under the slogan "for a reasonable drug policy".

The campaign appeared to be gathering support when one of the governing parties, the Social Democrats, ignored the leadership and joined the Ecologists in voting to support Droleq.

But in recent weeks the coalition had become resigned to defeat, although the result was far worse than forecast. Campaigners had argued that Droleq would break the illicit market for drugs.

Last year 80 per cent of the country's 44,638 drug-related charges involved possession

rather than dealing. According to official estimates, there are about 30,000 hard-drug users.

Health and judicial authorities opposed Droleq, saying it would turn the country into a European haven for drug traffickers and users.

Support groups were divided, many believing the proposal was ill-timed and too wide-ranging.

Droleq would have destroyed one of the pillars of the national drugs policy that has been used in recent years to stop the growth of "needle parks" in major cities.

Until the mid-1990s thousands of addicts gathered in public parks and disused railway sidings in cities such as Bern and Zurich to buy and

inject hard drugs. In regions with liberal policies, social services distributed clean syringes and consumption was tolerated within a confined area because of the sheer scale of the problem.

But in recent years the sharp rise in drug-related crime led to a clampdown. Regional approaches have been directed by a national policy based on a combination of prevention, social support, clean needles, therapy and repression against a crackdown on dealers.

Last year 70 per cent of Swiss rejected a private initiative by anti-drugs campaigners which was mainly designed to prevent the distribution of heroin to hardened addicts through

special medical centres. Supervised distribution received parliamentary approval after a three-year experiment showed it reduced overdoses, cut crime and allowed many of the 800 participants to find a home and stay in a job.

It is only addicts who are only allowed on the programme as a last resort and nearly two-thirds of them have stayed on the programme for two years.

A government commission suggested decriminalising soft drugs in 1989.

An official survey last week revealed that 27 per cent of people aged 15 to 39 had smoked cannabis at least once, a rise of 11 per cent in 1992.

Miss World 'raped by travel agent who offered a lift'

THE new Miss World, Linor Abargil, says she endured a two-hour sexual assault last month while in Italy for a fashion show, according to press reports yesterday.

Ms Abargil, who added the Miss World crown to her Miss Israel title on Saturday night, said she was attacked on October 6 in Milan after going to a travel agency to buy a plane ticket to Rome, where she planned to meet her mother before flying home.

The Egyptian owner of the travel agency has been arrested and charged with the rape, the newspapers said. The man offered to drive her to Rome himself, saying he had

business there and all the flights were booked, the reports added. Shortly after starting out, he pulled off the road, tied her up and assaulted her.

Afterwards he tried to apologise as he drove her back to Milan. Next morning she caught a train to Rome and went with her mother to tell the police what had happened.

The Milan police released details of an assault on an Israeli model at the time, and on Friday confirmed the victim's identity to the Italian state news agency Ansa. The Miss World organiser Julia Morley said that for legal reasons neither she nor Ms Abargil would comment. — AP, London.



Linor Abargil: Suffered two-hour assault while in Italy for a fashion show

Congo rebels

A

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JP 11-6-1520

Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions, is seen as Robert Mugabe's strongest opponent. The president, due in London tomorrow, has banned strikes and threatened stern action against union leaders

PHOTOGRAPH: ROB COOPER



Zimbabwe smoulders while Mugabe shops

A London-bound president hopes to keep the restive trade unionists and farmers in check from afar, writes **Andrew Meldrum** in Harare

PRESIDENT Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, due in London tomorrow for a pre-Christmas shopping trip, is expected to be taken to task by the Foreign Office for his seizure of land from white farmers and a decree forbidding trade unions to call strikes. He arrives in Britain at the end of a tour of five countries. When he left on November 21 many Zimbabweans were shocked that he should take such a lengthy absence while the country was embroiled in several crises. The row about his confiscation of 841 white-owned farms, the increasingly bitter labour unrest, grave economic troubles and Zimbabwe's role in the Congo war add up to serious trouble for his government. But the 74-year-old president and his young wife Grace did not see fit to curtail their now customary Christmas tour of London shops. And he broke his holiday at the weekend to issue an edict banning trade union strikes and threatening stern action against union leaders.

He used his sweeping presidential powers to restrict the Zimbabwean Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU), which has staged two successful strikes against government policies this month. The countrywide protests on November 11 and 18 stopped virtually all industrial, commercial and retail activity.

The increasingly assertive ZCTU and its secretary-general, Morgan Tsvangirai, are widely seen as Mr Mugabe's strongest opposition. The unions will challenge the strike ban in court. Some lawyers say it is unconstitutional and demonstrates the government's desperation in dealing with the public's increasing dissatisfaction.

"President Mugabe has now admitted that his government is no longer a popular one," the director of the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, Ms. Moyo, said. He accused the president of failing to govern responsibly and urged him to abandon his executive role and appoint a government of national reconstruction.

greeted with much scepticism in Zimbabwe: Zimbabwe, Angola, Namibia and Chad are not expected to stop fighting the Congolese rebels and their backers, Uganda and Rwanda. Although his London visit is a private one, Mr Mugabe is expected to meet some British officials. The land issue is likely to dominate discussions.

His acquisition orders on 841 white-owned farms to against the policy agreed by Zimbabwe's main aid donors: Britain, the European Union, the United States, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

His government assured them at a conference in Harare in September that its action on land would not disrupt food production or increase Zimbabwe's already crushing budget deficit, would be done only in consultation with all stakeholders, and would be in accordance with the constitution, which protects private property.

Congo truce falters as rebels vow to fight on

Jon Henley in Paris

AS THE Elysée palace claimed "indisputable progress" towards peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo yesterday, confusion surrounded a ceasefire agreement reached at a summit in Paris, which left rebels in the east vowing to continue fighting.

Kofi Annan, the United Nations secretary-general, who brought the leaders of six countries involved in the Congo insurgency to the negotiating table at the weekend summit, said they had promised to stop fighting immediately, although no accord had been signed.

"They committed themselves to accepting an immediate end to hostilities," Mr Annan said late on Saturday night. "I hope they will pursue this agreement with all the necessary energy and urgency when they get home."

The French president, Jacques Chirac, said the leaders of Uganda and Rwanda - which have backed the four-month rebellion against President Laurent Kabila - have agreed to end a conflict that has raised fears of all-out war across central Africa.

"Every party has made progress toward a greater rapprochement... to end this absurd and painful war," Mr Chirac said. "I have no reason to doubt their word. There is already a document. The final signing should be completed rapidly, before the Ouagadougou meeting of the Organisation of African Unity [OAU] on December 17-18."

The summit, which brought together 34 African heads of state and officials from 49 African countries, had been hailed as a diplomatic triumph for France. But the Rwandan president, Paul Kagame, said: "We are in the crocodile's jaws, and why should we negotiate with the crocodile which is cutting us up?"

Mr Kabila, whose forces are backed by Namibia, Zimbabwe, Angola, Chad and Sudan, came to power in May 1997 after a bloody civil war in which his troops defeated supporters of the long-serving dictator, Mobutu Sese Seko.

Accused by Rwanda of genocide against ethnic Tutsis during that conflict, he had refused before the summit to talk to either the rebels or the countries supporting them.

After first denying that any deal had been reached, Mr Kabila said a ceasefire agreement had been drafted and that he would put his name to it. He said a preliminary agreement should be signed in Lusaka, Zambia, around December 6, with a full deal to be hammered out in Ouagadougou.

But Mr Kabila warned: "If the rebels attack, if they advance, then we will have to continue to defend ourselves." He accused Rwanda and Uganda of pouring 30,000 troops into his country, and demanded their unconditional withdrawal.

"We are in the crocodile's jaws, and why should we negotiate with the crocodile which is cutting us up?" In Congo rebel leaders were sceptical of any deal. Wamba dia Wamba, head of the Congolese Rally for Democracy, said he did not reject it out of hand but that his forces would fight on since their positions were under constant threat of attack.

"Deals that exclude us won't be effective because they will not be implemented," he said.

New Banking and Savings Interest Rates from Nationwide

FROM 1ST DECEMBER 1998

NEW RATES FOR PERSONAL SAVERS

Previous				New			
Gross p.a.		Net p.a.		Gross p.a.		Net p.a.	
CashBuilder							
£50,000 +		5.40%		4.32%		3.92%	
£25,000 - £49,999		5.10%		4.08%		3.68%	
£10,000 - £24,999		4.70%		3.76%		3.36%	
£5,000 - £9,999		4.50%		3.60%		3.20%	
£1,000 - £4,999		4.30%		3.44%		3.04%	
£1 - £999		1.20%		1.00%		0.80%	
CapitalBuilder							
£50,000 +		6.40%		5.12%		4.72%	
£25,000 - £49,999		6.10%		4.88%		4.48%	
£10,000 - £24,999		5.80%		4.64%		4.24%	
£1 - £9,999		5.60%		4.48%		4.08%	
Monthly Income							
£50,000 +		6.10%		4.88%		4.48%	
£25,000 - £49,999		5.80%		4.64%		4.24%	
£10,000 - £24,999		5.50%		4.40%		4.00%	
£1 - £9,999		5.30%		4.24%		3.84%	
Bonus Saver							
£1 +		7.85%		6.28%		5.92%	
The Smart Account							
£1 +		7.70%		6.16%		5.80%	
Smart 2 Save							
£1 +		7.70%		6.16%		5.80%	
FlexiAccount							
£25,000 +		4.10%		3.28%		2.88%	
£10,000 - £24,999		3.10%		2.48%		2.08%	
£2,000 - £9,999		2.40%		1.92%		1.52%	
£1 - £1,999		1.50%		1.20%		0.80%	
Special Renewal Bond							
£100,000 +		8.20%		6.56%		7.70%	
£50,000 - £99,999		7.80%		6.24%		7.50%	
£25,000 - £49,999		7.60%		6.08%		7.10%	
£10,000 - £24,999		7.40%		5.92%		6.90%	
£1 - £9,999		7.30%		5.84%		6.80%	

Previous				New			
Gross p.a.		Net p.a.		Gross p.a.		Net p.a.	
TESSA							
£1 - £9,000		7.65%		6.12%		7.10%	
TESSA 2							
£1 - £9,000		7.65%		6.12%		5.68%	
InvestDirect							
£100,000 +		7.40%		5.92%		6.85%	
£50,000 - £99,999		7.35%		5.88%		6.80%	
£25,000 - £49,999		7.25%		5.80%		6.70%	
£10,000 - £24,999		7.15%		5.72%		6.55%	
£1 - £9,999		7.00%		5.60%		6.40%	
Members' Reward Bond Annual							
£1 - £10,000		8.25%		6.60%		7.75%	
Members' Reward Bond Monthly							
£1 - £10,000		7.95%		6.36%		7.45%	
Bonus 60* Annual							
£50,000 +		7.60%		6.08%		7.10%	
£50,000 - £99,999		7.20%		5.76%		6.70%	
£25,000 - £49,999		6.90%		5.52%		6.40%	
£10,000 - £24,999		6.60%		5.28%		6.10%	
£1 - £9,999		6.30%		5.04%		5.80%	
Bonus 60* Monthly							
£100,000 +		7.40%		5.92%		6.90%	
£50,000 - £99,999		6.90%		5.52%		6.40%	
£25,000 - £49,999		6.60%		5.28%		6.10%	
£10,000 - £24,999		6.30%		5.04%		5.80%	
£1 - £9,999		6.00%		4.80%		5.50%	

*Bonus 60 and Bonus 60 Monthly term include a 75% gross p.a. 10.00% net p.a. bonus which is variable and is awarded on monthly amounts. If no withdrawals are made during the calendar year, Bonus Term term include a 5.25% gross p.a. 2.00% net p.a. bonus which will only be paid if between £10,000 and £24,999. The calendar month for the calendar month for at least 11 and 12 in a year and withdrawal made. The bonus is variable but is guaranteed in this rate under the same and the same.

TESSA minimum stay for eligibility 18 years. Only one TESSA per person. Term 5 years. Maximum investment limits are £10,000 for first and £10,000 subsequent 4 years. Withdrawal after the overall 18 years 12 months

*Bonuses 60 and 60+ Monthly Income are payable at 10.00% gross p.a. (9.00% net p.a.) in arrears on the 1st of each month. Bonuses 60+ are payable at 10.00% gross p.a. (9.00% net p.a.) in arrears on the 1st of each month. Bonuses 60 are payable at 10.00% gross p.a. (9.00% net p.a.) in arrears on the 1st of each month. Bonuses 60+ are payable at 10.00% gross p.a. (9.00% net p.a.) in arrears on the 1st of each month. Bonuses 60 are payable at 10.00% gross p.a. (9.00% net p.a.) in arrears on the 1st of each month. Bonuses 60+ are payable at 10.00% gross p.a. (9.00% net p.a.) in arrears on the 1st of each month.

NEW RATES FOR BUSINESS SAVERS

Previous				New				Previous				New			
		Gross p.a.		Net p.a.		Gross p.a.		Net p.a.				Gross p.a.		Net p.a.	
Business Investor										Treasures' Trust Account					
£50,000 +		5.40%		3.92%		4.90%		3.92%		£1 +		3.10%		2.48%	
£25,000 - £49,999		5.00%		4.00%		4.50%		3.60%		Portfolio Investor					
£10,000 - £24,999		4.50%		3.60%		3.90%		3.12%		£50,000 +		6.70%		5.36%	
£5,000 - £9,999		4.10%		3.28%		3.50%		2.80%		£1 - £49,999		6.50%		5.20%	
£2,000 - £4,999		3.80%		3.04%		3.20%		2.56%				6.00%		4.72%	
												1.80%			

If the account balance on Business Investor falls below £2,000 interest will be paid at 0.50% gross p.a. (0.40% net p.a.) Interest is calculated daily and paid quarterly on the 1st of March, June, September and December. For Business Investor and Portfolio Investor, interest is paid half-yearly on 30th June and 31st December. Portfolio Investor is only available for personal funds.

NEW RATES FOR ACCOUNTS NO LONGER AVAILABLE

Previous						New						
Account Name	Balance	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.	Account Name	Balance	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.	
Asset Reserve	£50,000 +	5.40%	4.32%	4.90%	3.92%	IncomeBond	£10,000 +	6.30%	5.04%	5.80%	4.64%	
	£10,000 - £49,999	5.00%	4.00%	4.50%	3.60%		£1 - £9,999	6.00%	4.80%	5.50%	4.10%	
	£10,000 - £24,999	4.50%	3.60%	3.90%	3.12%							
	£5,000 - £9,999	4.10%	3.28%	3.50%	2.80%							
	£2,000 - £4,999	3.80%	3.04%	3.20%	2.56%							
CapitalBonus 180	£25,000 +	6.65%	5.32%	6.15%	4.92%	TaxFree Option Instant	£25,000 +	5.10%	4.08%	4.60%	3.68%	
	£10,000 - £24,999	6.35%	5.08%	5.85%	4.68%		£10,000 - £24,999	4.70%	3.76%	4.20%	3.36%	
	£1 - £9,999	5.80%	4.64%	5.30%	4.24%		£5,000 - £9,999	4.50%	3.60%	4.00%	3.20%	
					£10,000 - £24,999		4.30%	3.44%	3.80%	3.04%		
CapitalBonus 90	£25,000 +	6.10%	4.88%	5.60%	4.48%	TaxFree Option 90 Day	£25,000 +	6.10%	4.88%	5.60%	4.48%	
	£10,000 - £24,999	5.80%	4.64%	5.30%	4.24%		£10,000 - £24,999	5.80%	4.64%	5.30%	4.24%	
	£1 - £9,999	5.60%	4.48%	5.10%	4.08%		£1 - £9,999	5.60%	4.48%	5.10%	4.08%	
CapitalBonus 90 Monthly/Half-Yearly	£25,000 +	5.80%	4.64%	5.30%	4.24%	TaxFree Option 180 Day	£25,000 +	6.65%	5.32%	6.15%	4.92%	
	£10,000 - £24,999	5.50%	4.40%	5.00%	4.00%		£10,000 - £24,999	6.35%	5.08%	5.85%	4.68%	
	£1 - £9,999	5.30%	4.24%	4.80%	3.84%		£1 - £9,999	5.80%	4.64%	5.30%	4.24%	
BonusBuilder	£25,000 +	5.10%	4.08%	4.60%	3.68%	DoubleBonus	£1 +	4.30%	3.40%	3.80%	3.04%	
	£10,000 - £24,999	4.70%	3.76%	4.20%	3.36%							
	£5,000 - £9,999	4.50%	3.60%	4.00%	3.20%		Bonus 90	£20,000 +	6.10%	4.88%	5.60%	4.48%
	£500 - £4,999	4.30%	3.44%	3.80%	3.04%			£10,000 - £19,999	5.80%	4.64%	5.30%	4.24%
	£1 - £499	1.50%	1.20%	1.00%	0.80%		£1 - £9,999	5.60%	4.48%	5.10%	4.08%	
						Subscription Share	£1 - £200 per month	7.85%	6.28%	7.10%	5.92%	

*If the account balance on Asset Reserve falls below £2,000 interest will be paid at 0.50% gross p.a. (0.40% net p.a.) Interest is calculated daily and paid quarterly on the 1st of March, June, September and December.

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Comment

e-mail

David Sharrock
@Gaza

ON BAGHDAD Street, outside the Koran Clinic for Treating Diseases, my back was killing me again. Sheikh Ziad Tatar sympathised and led me into his consulting room. He had just cured a 22-year-old woman from Beer-sheba of chest pains and headaches and sniffed dismissively when I told him I wasn't a Muslim. "Doesn't matter — the Koran is the strongest medicine there is. It can even cure infidels."

According to Sheikh Ziad, a 59-year-old Gaza, healing is about getting rid of the *djinn* which invade our bodies at vulnerable moments and take up residence.

With his best bedside manner, the sheikh squeezed my cranium. I was worried — was there a *djinn* in me? He thought not. "Someone has envied you in the last two months. They were jealous and a *djinn* breathed into you, blew bad winds into you."

The sheikh put headphones over my ears and the soulful wail of a muezzin filled the room. He told me to raise my hands and I felt my fingertips tingling. Then I was asked to sit up and to stretch out my right palm and squeeze the fingers together. The fingers would force themselves apart, he said, and began praying aloud. They did — and they felt cold and numb. "Those are the *djinn* winds leaving you," said the sheikh, bringing the consultation to a close. The pain in my back was gone.

Just to prove this was no one-off fluke with an infidel, he invited me to sit in on his next patient. Ali Hassan Salah, a 19-year-old man, was suffering from terrible nightmares and violent fits. The sheikh began his medicine. Reciting "In the name of the merciful God," he laid an open Quran on the reclining Ali's chest. "How are you, what's your name?" "Adza," replied Ali. "That's the *djinn* talking to me, I've established contact, now let's see what he's doing in there," whispered the sheikh.

THEN in a stronger voice he asked rapid-fire questions. "Are you a muslim?" "Yes." "How long have you been with this man?" "Four years." "Does a muslim harm a muslim?" "No." "Are you harming a muslim?" "Yes."

"Why?" "For nothing. I regret. I repent." "Okay, I'm not going to beat you, but I want you to go now."

A few minutes more and then silence. A quick spray of holy water on the head and feet and the patient is pronounced cured.

Say it's hocus pocus if you prefer, but Sheikh Ziad Tatar has taught MA students of sociology and psychology at Israel's Ben Gurion University. On occasion, when all else has failed, he has been called on to give treatment at Beer-sheba hospital.

My back is still pain-free — but what happens if it returns? Getting into Gaza isn't always easy. No worries, said the sheikh. "I can cure you over the Internet. ziad@palnet.com."

SHOW SOME
COMPASSION! LET THE
FRAIL OLD MAN GO!

GET THE MURDEROUS
BASTARD BANG TO
RIGHTS!!



We're all middle class now and doing nicely, aren't we? Except for the poor

Polly
Toynbee



BRITAIN has changed. The Office of National Statistics today publishes a new official definition of social class: four of the seven new social bands are defined as middle class. Most of us now call ourselves middle class and all the previous official categories have been abolished to reflect this seismic shift. As manual work has shrunk and the service sector mushroomed, the old vision of a mass working class ruled by a tiny elite has gone.

Foreigners still like to caricature us as a deeply class-bound society, obsessed with subtle social niceties in which we size up one another within moments by accent, occupation, origins and education. But such a nation was always a quaint anachronism. She is the sum of what we remember from a 1950s childhood, a world away now.

At last we are gradually shedding empty social institutions. The most outrageous of these is the House of Lords. However much mocked, along with the monarchy, an aristocracy with real power has remained a dangerous symbol of a society still dominated by privilege, caste and deference.

While Tories cling to these as our "heritage", it makes us an absurdity abroad. Worse, it lingers with a schizoid image of ourselves. Away from them all their ludicrous titles: their continuing presence means we are denied America's self-image of a classless society of opportunity. It was never true of America, but believing it is half the battle for freedom. How can you have an ideology of freedom and equality of opportunity when every-

where we are sucked back into an image of serfdom? The new official social classes define three bands of working class or non-working poor — and then four middle-class bands of senior management and professionals, middle managers, public sector and clerical workers. These great changes have come with a four-fold increase in average incomes, mass home-ownership and a new generation where one in three now goes to university.

But the news is not all good. We are now in danger of imitating some of the worst as well as the best of American class attitudes. The advantage of a mass working-class society with high trade-union membership and some idea of class solidarity was that the poor marched alongside better-paid workers, or at least hung on to their coat-tails, represented by the same political party. To win, politicians had to capture a middle-class vote. Now, to win, a party has to catch middle-class Britain — and the poor are only included out of convenience, never a vote-getting rallying cry. Sometimes fear of crime stirs some sense of obligation to them, though more often it is an extra stick to beat them with.

As average incomes and opportunities rose, so the poor fell behind alarmingly: we are now as unequal a society as we were at the turn of the century, a chilling statistic. Called the underclass by the Tories or the socially excluded by Labour, the 25 per cent left behind in almost entirely benefit-dependent social housing now have no voice. While FR would at least make each of their votes

worth soliciting for the first time, they will take some persuading to vote after so many years of total exclusion from the political process. To its great credit, the Government is devoting most of its enthusiasm and money to drawing them back into the mainstream, with training, jobs and more money for those who can't work. But the redistribution all has to be done by stealth, hoping the mass middle class won't notice. Sworn not to use the fairest means — income tax — the Government resorts to back-door means, a cunning windfall tax or a hike of heavily state-subsidised private pensions. So far they've done well, with increases for the working poor in the working families tax credit, the minimum pension guarantee and higher child benefit.

WELFARE reform is also being done by stealth, slice by slice, presented by Alistair Darling as just sensible good housekeeping to his mighty £100 billion budget. Hague taunts Blair, claiming he's botched out and Frank Field's sackings proves it. But Hague misses the point. Welfare reform is quietly galloping on apace. Looked in the Queen's speech like tinkering with disability and widows' benefits is part of a revolution: just these small changes will save £1.3 billion to be better used on those who need it most. Step by step, benefit by benefit, eventually the National Insurance system will be demolished and replaced with a system that makes sure every penny the state spends goes to the poorest. Before long the only state insurance will be a

guarantee against poverty — and quite rightly so.

Today's new class banding shows why welfare reform is so urgently needed. Fifty years ago, Beveridge devised NI for a society where universal benefits largely hit their target. Then, to be old was to be poor: now, only a third of pensioners are really poor, with each retiring generation richer. To be sick or unemployed left the mass of people with nothing to fall back on: now not necessarily so. Only universal child benefit still hits the mark: alarming numbers of children are in the poorest households and most families with children are much poorer than the child-free. Taxing it back from higher-tax-rate families means the money saved will increase child benefit by almost £1.

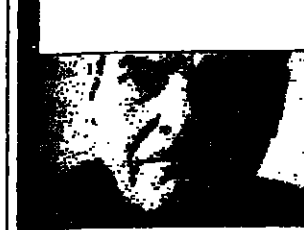
All this redistributes directly from the pockets of the comfortable to those of the poor. Yet oddly, those most vehemently opposed are old Labour — led by Barbara Castle — still operating on the old mass working-class model. But it is the middle classes who stand to lose. If Labour dare not take money from them in income tax, then they'll take it in National Insurance entitlements instead.

Now that the middle class is all-powerful, we need a great audit of all state expenditure to see who gets most. Are the poor getting their fair share? In education, savings, mortgages, pensions and travel-to-work subsidies, the middle classes win heavily. While every penny for the poor is hard-won, transparent expenditure, the middle-class welfare state is too well-camouflaged.

If you need hospital treatment, you may be better off in Barcelona

Lessons of Leonardo

Peter
Preston



FIRST, true confessions. This column was about to consist of an erudite comparison of VAT rates across Western Europe when, rather suddenly, my younger daughter had her first baby in a hospital high on a hill overlooking Barcelona. It is thus about something rather more human than VAT.

I am beginning to be more experienced in the ways of the Spanish (national) health service than I am in those of the NHS. There was the time that Daughter A and Daughter B needed 27 stitches (in total) when a Coke bottle exploded. The time Daughter B went over the front of a moped into a metal signpost (23 stitches). The time, three years ago, when I tripped in the Passage de Gracia and broke a leg. And now there is Little Leonardo, a wallowing nine and a quarter pounds, necessarily delivered by Caesarian section.

Four different hospitals in four different blinds — and all of them, in their ways, utterly brilliant. The leg was X-rayed and plastered — waiting in line — in four and a half hours door to door, and cost £365. (The 18 stitches I had in Singapore three weeks ago, after an argument with a tree, cost £3,275.20.) My daughter, meanwhile, lies in a private room with an en suite bathroom, television and telephone. Her husband is with her. He has a bed in the same room. One midwife on the case stopped long after her shift because she wanted to see the baby. The bell seems to bring a nurse in 60 seconds flat, and they all come in smiling. The doctors grin and say good morning. The security guard on the hospital gate grins and says good evening. Daughter B would, with a normal birth, have stayed in hospital for three days. The Caesarian means five or six.

Is this special treatment? No, the floors of the hospital are pavilioned in rooms like this and decked with staff like this. Nothing special: standard for everyone. And what, tremulously, will it cost? This is the health service. It will cost nothing. Free at point of delivery.

There are differences, of course. Daughter B isn't eating yet, but her live-in husband has to forage for his own food. Test trolleys don't clank along these corridors. Nor when nappies or bandages need to be changed, is there an impulsion to ring the bell. The husband is there to work, learn and share. He'll need that experience. Spain doesn't have visiting midwives, dropping in later.

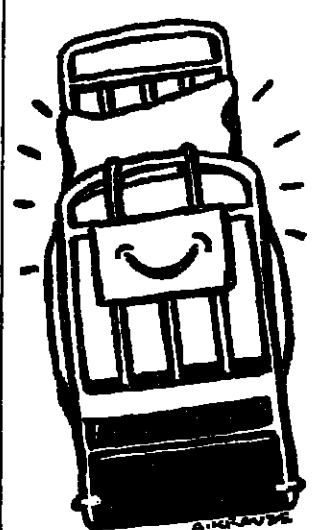
BUT these — and the word is chosen deliberately — are differences, not pluses or minuses. I'm not exalting one hospital system over another, nor turning this into another kind of drum-beating national competition. That would be ridiculous. Four hospitals don't make a statistically valid sample, any more than the slightly dingy South London ward with flapping curtains and noises off where my other grandchildren were born can carry a flag for the NHS. Flag-waving is futile.

What is not at all futile, though, at moments of stress, is to start with the human dimension. The Britain I left behind at Luton Airport — the Britain of the Mail and the Sun — was still binging on about relative tax burdens as though they were the heart of everything. Success and low taxes begin at Dover. Economic failure and penal taxes on food, children's clothes, even newspapers themselves — begin at Calais and Santander. The divide is full of fear and loathing. Chancellor Brown starts looking for his veto. You can feel the pall of the political years to come descending. But life, real life,

isn't like that at all. The food I go out to buy for my daughter's husband while he hovers on nappy duty isn't more expensive because it carries the weight of VAT; it is, at the margins, rather cheaper than the supermarket at the bottom of my London road.

(And that is a reasonably scientific conclusion, because the Sunday Times, sampling across Europe, produced the same result.) Tesco and Sainsbury's are geared to make profits far beyond normal European gearing: their profits and market share are a definition of their well-being. When M&S staggers, it's a national crisis. Do we simply plunk VAT on top of that particular profit mountain and reach deeper into our pockets? Equally, the children's clothes I spent Saturday afternoon for are no dearer than they seemed, five days before, in the marbled halls of Manchester's new temple of consumerism, the Trafford Centre. Newspapers cost a few pence more, to be sure, but then Spain hasn't had the benefit of Mr Murdoch's price warfare. But books are cheaper, and so is a taxi to the hospital and a metro ride back. Hotels clock in at roughly half the London rate. (Our capital, remember, has lately been declared the most expensive tourist destination in the world.)

How do you construct a rigid thesis from such a bag full of disparities? You can if you want to prove some pre-ordained conclusion, larding property and employment taxes into one side of the column and leaving the other side blank. You can say that, since Spain's conservative government caught the New Labour bug, jobs have been



The bell seems to bring a nurse in 60 seconds, and they all come in smiling

created faster than anywhere in Europe. But you can equally say that the bug-resistant French economy, riven by strikes and run by socialists fearsome enough to shiver Mail timbers, is leaving most of the EU (and certainly Britain) trailing in its wake.

There are no simplicities to these racketing arguments. There are only different assumptions dancing to different tunes, and economic theory — let alone tax harmonisation — is a tiny part of that equation. Mr Brown doesn't need a veto. He could start by attacking Luxembourg's tax haven intricacies and watch Jacques Santer's face turn puce. And the rest of us, meanwhile, could get back to human basics.

Isn't the money you pay; it's what you get for it. If you get a sparkling hospital with smiling staff who don't watch the clock and stay with you, when you need them, because they care, then price ceases to matter. If you live in a society — any society — where taxes are a means to an end, not an end in themselves, an expression of the will of that society, then you're blessed: for society exists.

Little Leonardo sends his best regards (or would do if he weren't asleep). His parents and grandparents do likewise. We'll leave Germany's 56.6 per cent corporation tax rate in peace for other, greyer days.

Trouble with foreigners

Endpiece

Roy Hattersley

RAVELLO was closed for winter. The sea was still more blue than grey. And the trees on the mountains which ran down to the water's edge were only streaked with russet and brown. But the men who were replacing the roof on the duomo blew on their fingers every time they touched a freezing terracotta tile, and the piazza below was deserted until the arrival of an English coach with the words "Globe Bus" painted along its side.

Among the passengers who spilled out on to the cobbles was a woman with a copy of a weekly newspaper. It contained a story about her grandfather, a Ravello man. Almost 100 years ago, he had left Italy to find fortune, if not fame, in England. He had made a fortune and sold ice cream. As soon as I saw the faded photo-

graph — Tuscan hair and waxed moustache — I recognised Antonio, even though I had not heard his name for more than 50 years.

Before the war my grandmother used to sing about him every time she heard the bell which told us that the ice-cream cart had arrived in our road. I was never allowed to stop him and buy one. For it was assumed that, being Italian, he did not observe the rules of health which were essential to the wellbeing of a four-year old Anglo-Saxon.

But I had no doubt his character. "Left me all alone-to. All on my own-to." Like all Latins, he was not to be trusted.

To me, Antonio was the embodiment of all the characteristics which represented his country. Marianne herself, bearing one breast as she strode across the barricades, had been kept from me. So I thought of France as typified by a man on a bicycle with strings of onions hanging from his

handlebars. Indeed I possessed a full set of European stereotypes. Dutchmen wore clogs and grew tulips. The Swiss made cuckoo clocks and shot apples off each other's heads. Russians had snow on their boots.

We were no more chauvinistic than our neighbours. My father, who had lived in Rome for seven years, loved Italy and the Italians but he was part of a generation which, when it did not fear foreigners, thought they were funny.

When I listen to arguments about Britain's role in the European Union, echoes of those over-confident days ring around my head. We have not managed completely to obliterate the image of Antonio from our minds.

We were brought up to be particularly patronising about southern Italy — aided and abetted by Carlo Levi, who told my generation that Christ Stopped at Eboli. The only town in southern Italy at which we had heard was Naples, where the wife of the

English minister-in-residence (Hamilton by name) had become emotionally attached to a sailor called Nelson. As far as we were concerned, the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies was still ruled by a man who enjoyed blowing up his subjects and had the nickname Bomba.

We were worried about the suffering endured by

England happened to be the first hen I saw when I broke out of the egg

the elephants when Hannibal took them across the Alps and believed that Roman culture had been obliterated by a nasty accident at Pompeii in 79 AD.

My father told me that the Romans, in a brave attempt to control congestion, forbade carts to enter the city walls between sunrise and sunset. But he also said that when their de-

scendants attempted a more modest form of regulation in the 1920s, the first policeman to direct traffic around the Victor Emmanuel Monument as run over by the three motorcars that crashed into each other.

He would not — in those good old days of Austin Morris and Humber — have believed that, before the end of the century, Italy would have a thriving motor industry of its own while Britain had become a colonial outpost of the German, Japanese and American automotive empires.

When I first went to Rome in 1965, he warned me to beware of beggars — something which I not previously seen. Now, men and women are sleeping in London shop doorways and Italy's national income per head of population is higher than ours.

I do not describe the errors of my youth in order to denigrate the country of my birth. Like JB Priestley, I would prefer a holiday in Tuscany to one in the Black Country. But if I were to

choose a place to live, I would certainly prefer Wolverhampton to Florence. However, I have enough sense to realise that my affection is the result of England being the first hen I saw when I broke out of the egg. In consequence, I have felt an irrational devotion to it ever since.

In my more rational moments, I resent the damage it has suffered because of people who, believing Britain to be inherently superior, will not accept the disciplines which have made other European nations more prosperous.

It is too late for me to forget about Antonio and his ice cream cart. But last week, as I travelled from Ravello to Naples along the motorway and then boarded the Eurostar for the journey north, the thought that I was on a railway system too expensive and sophisticated for Great Britain to afford convinced me of a new certainty. He was just the sort of man with whom I would be happy to join in monetary union.

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No one ever blamed cricket or rugby for violent behaviour at matches.
David Davies, Letters

Straw's decision

It's what he is there for

DAMNED if he do, and damned if he don't. That's supposed to be Jack Straw's fate over the extradition of Senator-for-life Augusto Pinochet. But Home Secretaries are there to take tricky decisions, which is the reason the other great offices of state are safer stepping stones to the premiership (the cyclically-adjusted Chancellorship excepted). The decision on Pinochet is no different in kind from what the Home Secretary's in-tray usually contains, to do with prisoner release or the commutation of sentences. In other words, it's about the politics of justice.

Extradition is political business. Indeed, one of the grounds on which Mr Straw can refuse to allow proceedings to go ahead is his judgment that the case against Pinochet is "political", whatever that might mean. Pessimal about letting the courts have their say cannot conceal that before arrest warrants are issued and at salient points during the judicial process interventions

are there to be made by a man wearing not a wig but a party hat. The boundary between law and politics is getting less distinct; it will get muddier when the new Human Rights Act is cited by judges who — as the Pinochet case shows — are neither clear nor intellectually compelling in their thinking about the state and its powers.

So all Jack Straw is being called upon to do is what he is professional at: politics. Weighing advantages, that is, to persons and party, making calculations that may, indeed ought to encompass values, beliefs and that amorphous thing the national interest. Pinochet's health is a real consideration. It wouldn't do for British proceedings to kill their subject, the adjudication of human rights abuses not generally involving the capital sentence. But there is more to health than doctors' opinions. Forensic medicine applied to a "fitness to stand trial" has proved to be a plastic art. The Chilean foreign minister's "offer" that Pinochet stands trial at home kills the health question: if he is well enough to stand trial there, why not here and in Spain? There are, also, calculations to be made about civil peace in Chile and how we best support, over the long term, the entrenching of participative democracy there without, as at present, the threat of military coup or right wing revolt.

Procedure is going to be all-important

during the next few days. Mr Straw will, if he is wise, seek to protect himself from judicial review, for Pinochet's allies are rich and resourceful. He must forget his earlier student activist self and avoid giving any impression of feeding what, unfortunately, has seemed like a blood lust on the part of former left wingers whose gods failed but whose appetite for Jacobin procedure is unabated. His obligations are now far wider.

The Pinochet case may come to be seen as the labour pains of the birth of a new system of human rights adjudication. It has already helped open up national systems to external scrutiny and so implicitly given present and future victims of nation-state tyranny the hope of vindication by outside means. There may be — it has to be recognised — problems in the way Pinochet was allowed to come to Britain under the official assumption that he was immune; in his case the adage that non-knowledge of the law is no excuse hardly applies when the law is developing almost daily. But the individual's discomfort diminishes to the point of insignificance when measured against the standard of hope that this case has raised: the prospect that, albeit after many years, albeit at a distance, justice is infeasible. Jack Straw is a mere agent of process ... but what a process. On it depends not just the wishes of Chileans, at home and abroad, but

a wider constituency needing assurance that this imperfect world offers an eventual possibility of justice. His affirmation of last week's House of Lords ruling is enjoined by the conviction — and this is a belief to separate the sheep and the goats — that this world can be made a more just place.

The boss walks

But is it heroic?

MARTIN Taylor goes and billions (well nearly two) are wiped off Barclays Bank's valuation. Sir Richard Greenbury is kicked upstairs and brokers declare a bull market in his successor's reputation. Just how much does personality matter in business? Companies purport to pay top dogs objectively but the real difference made by individuals, for better or for worse, is often grotesquely exaggerated. In politics, too, it's often observed how for a mature democracy we seem curiously enthralled by the Führerprinzip. Not just Tony, either. There is as much over-expectation surrounding William Hague whose party's problems are structural and ideological.

As for business, markets are made by men only up to a point. Bill Gates, supremely lucky, showed flair and imagination

in securing the tie-up with IBM that made Microsoft's operating system the industry standard. But how much room for manoeuvre exists in most business environments? Martin Taylor may be a great intellect (though a cynic might believe that his advice on social security benefit reform was surprisingly ordinary) but the position of Barclays like the other clearing banks remains a curious compound of history, inefficiency permitted by customer inertia together with tumultuous competition from the "virtual" financial service providers. A brand (Marks and Spencers) is built on a style. Fashions change, clients age — few bosses buck long cycles in corporate ecology. Great claims have been made for how Mr Taylor's departure shows corporate governance working well: it would be interesting to see more mundane evidence of the impact of non-executive directors in determining companies' fate.

Genius is rare. Most contenders are epigones, time-servers, exploiters of fortune, professionals who worked their way up. Barclays' long run fate will get worked out little differently now Mr Taylor is no longer at the helm. He, however, may be fitted for new corporate tasks — but more because he will be expected to do great things than because he genuinely is Alexander the Great of British enterprise.

Letters to the Editor

Behind the headlines

Focusing on fundamental change equates to blindness (Melissa Benn, November 29). I am guilty. The Equal Opportunities Commission has fought cases, clarified law, and recommended changes to legislation — within a tiny budget.

This may not always make headlines, but, as millions across the country who have had their quality of life improved will confirm, it works. Kamlesh Bahl, Equal Opportunities Commission, Manchester.

So an Ofsted inspector who "bulled and intimidated teachers" is to be derided, and Chris Woodhead says he does not normally announce such decisions (Ofsted drops inspector, November 29).

Why not Mr Woodhead? It's what you do to failing schools, isn't it? Why not to failing inspectors? Derek Gillard, Marston, Oxford.

WHY not have an O-zone at the Millers and Domes? It could be filled with smog and contain displays showing the effect on the planet of the unnecessary use of materials for an absurd and irrelevant project that scarcely anyone wants and no one needs. It could also show how 778 million could help reduce poverty and promote energy conservation.

Steve Bell is the obvious choice of designer. Tony Shelton, Leeds.

WHAT a tortuous dilemma Tony Blair threatens to inflict upon hereditary peers by planning a Boxing Day sitting for the Lords (Christmas is cancelled, November 29). They will be torn between staying at home to attend the traditional Boxing Day hunt or going to the House — a choice between kill the fox or kill the bill.

Peter Allen, Worthing, West Sussex.

SO, eating babies is good for you (Diet of premature babies affects 16, November 27). I'm willing to give it a try if you can give a suitable recipe. Robert Hill, Edinburgh.

Stone's Turkish myths

NORMAN Stone (The other extradition, November 29) writes glowingly of Turkey's free media and "social circumstances that are way above those of any of her neighbours". The pro-Kurdish Guardian newspaper has had its Istanbul offices bombed in suspicious circumstances, and has been banned and had to change its name four times in recent years.

Perhaps Mr Stone's acceptance of the pro-government line of the rest of the Turkish press has sheltered him from the extreme poverty prevalent in the Kurdish south-east. Government village clearance programmes have created a situation not dissimilar to that of Kosovo. The only difference is the effectiveness of the Turkish propaganda machine which allows Mr Stone to overlook such trivialities.

Chris Weston, Wrotham, Kent.

NORMAN Stone criticises Pinochet's extradition but not that of the Kurdish "terrorist" leader Abdullah Ocalan. This is, of course, the same Norman Stone who, in company with other do-gooders, sides with the "terrorist" KLA in Kosovo.

As your leader (November 29) admitted, Turkey's treatment of the Kurds is far worse than anything the West

has done to the Kurds in Kosovo. The Kurds are politically persecuted, banned from using their language and denied minority rights. Turkey pursues a policy of assimilation at gunpoint, deeming all its inhabitants to be Turkish.

Kosovo's Albanians, in contrast, could through their own political parties be running most of Kosovo's local government provided they abandon their boycott of the ballot box. They also enjoy full language rights and are a recognised minority.

The irony is that the air power recently amassed by Nato to intimidate Yugoslavia included a Turkish contingent. You would have the international community deal with the Turks as they have done with the Serbs. This presumption means unleashing Richard Holbrooke on Ankara and allowing Serb warplanes to participate in any bombing of Turkey.

Mike Finch, Teddington, Middx.

YOU were absolutely correct to say that while Turkey "accepts a few thousand Greeks, Jews and Armenians as legitimate minorities, the same is not done for at least 8 million Kurds".

But at the beginning of the century there were 2 million Armenians living in Turkey.



Christmas is coming and coming

IT IS called the Christmas "season" with good cause — some shops and businesses introduce a Christmas theme in September. This gives three months in the year that we run the risk of being reminded that Christmas is coming — one day out of four.

We should reduce the seasonal status of Christmas and create instead a month of Christmas, outside of which no reindeers or piped carol singing would be allowed. It could replace December or be added as a 13th month since the lunar cycle is a much more sensible basis for our calendar. Christmas Day could fall on the 25th of Christmonth or Yule.

We could all feel a little more tolerant knowing that the "feeding frenzy" is contained within safe limits. Allan Mackenzie, Inverness.

Football fever

THE apparent increase in football hooliganism this season (Comeback by soccer thugs, November 26) should not be ignored, but the mistakes of the seventies and eighties in viewing this as a "football problem", should not be repeated.

Any form of hooliganism or other anti-social behaviour is a symptom of wider social ills, as can be seen in any town on any Friday night. Violent and abusive behaviour at cricket and rugby matches and at racecourses is also on the rise. Nobody ever blamed the sport in those cases.

You noted that one of the most violent outbreaks this season was a match between Glasgow Rangers and Shelbourne. It was switched from Glasgow's own ground to Tranmere Rovers' Prenton Park, because the sectarian violence was expected to be much worse if executed as an "Orange invasion" of Dublin.

"Violence is a people problem, and another long, hard look at football will have no effect. David Davies, Salford.

Pinochet, Blair Peach and the culture of impunity

HUGO Young (Law lords leave one man with no place to hide, November 29) is quite right to extend discussion of the Pinochet affair to the "professional ennui" of ministers in Britain.

We have a culture of impunity in this country, too. One of the final acts of professional ennui by the last Labour government in 1978 was to remain unmoved by the violent events of April 23 in Southall, during which a teacher, Blair Peach, was killed. At least 10 witnesses saw him killed by one of six police officers, but none of them has been brought to justice since.

In the intervening years impunity has taken root — for the rich and powerful and for racism in the police force in particular. The consequences of the latter have slowly been uncovered by the inquiry into the death of Stephen Lawrence.

In the meantime, as Baroness Thatcher and the Tory rump stumble to the defence of the indefensible, the links between their partiality for Pinochet and the culture they promoted in Britain are made ever more apparent.

Next year it will be 20 years since Blair Peach's death — less than the time that now separates us from the Chilean coup. The events being planned to commemorate him will offer another chance to reflect on the culture of impunity that still prevails in Britain, and for ministers to cast off their professional ennui in favour of decisive action that puts an end to this dreadful legacy once and for all. David Ransom, Lechlade, Glos.

AN Black's claim that "thousands of people" have been burning British flags in the streets of Santiago (Fears for trade and diplomacy, November 27) is nonsense and simply grist to the mill of hardline Pinochetists who are trying to create an image of chaos in order to blackmail the British authorities into releasing their leader.

As for one fair-sized demonstration after Pinochet's arrest, demonstrations in his favour have involved no more than a few score people at the most a couple of hundred — and flag-burning incidents have been very few. What is remarkable about the whole affair is how little effect it has had on the streets.

The vast majority of Chileans simply want the general off their backs. As recent polls have shown, whether this is achieved at home or abroad is a matter of less concern. Malcolm Coad, Santiago, Chile.

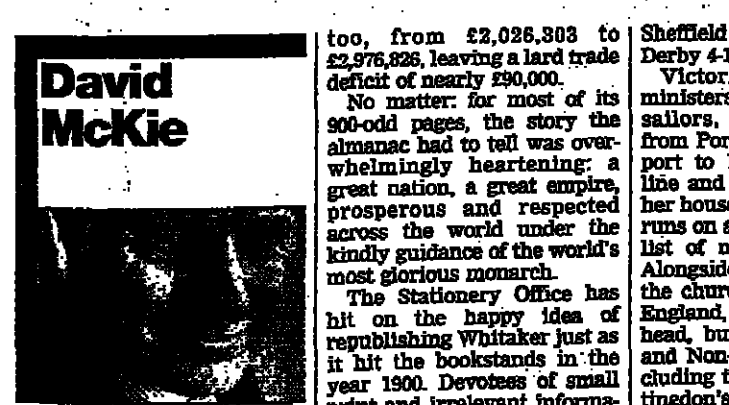
Betrayal on Pinochet would be the final straw. Tony Abramson, Leeds.

QUOTE OF THE DAY FROM CORBY

"James, why don't you write books that people can read."

Nora Joyce

Victorian values



THE value of Britain's exports of lard to the rest of the world soared, I have just discovered, from £1,588,143 in 1897 to £2,887,801 the following year. How gratifying such figures must have been for Victorian believers in progress as they came across them in Whitaker's Almanac — at least until they discovered a few pages later that imports of lard were up

too, from £2,026,303 to £2,976,826, leaving a lard trade deficit of nearly £90,000.

No matter for most of its 900-odd pages, the story the almanac had to tell was overwhelmingly heartening: a great nation, a great empire, prosperous and respected across the world under the kindly guidance of the world's most glorious monarch.

The Stationery Office has hit on the happy idea of republishing Whitaker just as it hit the bookstands in the year 1900. Devotees of small print and irrelevant information have rarely had such a treat, but anyone with a sense of history should treasure it too, for here is a portrait, assembled by random accumulation, of a sedate, settled, somewhat self-satisfied nation as it contemplates a new century, with income tax at 9p in the pound, and day trips to Hampton Court by rail from London for 1s 10d return, and the FA Cup in the hands of

Sheffield United, who beat Derby 4-1.

Victoria dominates: her ministers, her soldiers, her sailors, her dockyards — from Portsmouth and Devonport to Esquimaux, Haubourline and Trimoulet — and her household, whose roll call runs on as unrelentingly as a list of movie credits today. Alongside the Queen stands the church — the Church of England, of which she is head, but also the Catholics and Non-conformists, not excluding the Countess of Huntingdon's Connection.

When they are not on their knees, the Victorians are forming societies, many of which survive, though others I think have been lost: the Society for the Study of Inebriety, for instance, or the London Society for Teaching the Blind to Read And Training Them in Industrial Occupations, which I dare say was known for short as the LSFTIBTRATIO. The Early

Closing Association is here (its acronym is Larkling) and the City of London Truss Society ("for the relief of the ruptured poor throughout the United Kingdom").

NOWHERE is the sense of wellbeing greater than in the profiles of nations abroad, both ours and other people's — reflecting the fact that the information is here supplied by their governments. Only the Scots are short-changed: their account reads like the work of a condescending Sassenach, congratulating them on eventually coming round to appreciate the benefits of the Union, and conceding that their Calvinistic religion, though it has in every case led them to piety, helps promote thought and mental activity.

Were there one stumble across the disadvantaged. Surprisingly, these include the deans and chapters of several dioceses, who at some

stage agreed to take, in lieu of fixed money payments, certain estates estimated to produce the same income. "They are consequently suffering more or less from the present agricultural depression."

Each county and town has its population of paupers: in some areas — Dorset, Herefordshire, Norfolk, parts of North Wales and northern Scotland — 4 per cent of the population fall into this category. The mentally ill and handicapped are described, brutally as it now seems, as lunatics; they are housed in institutions like the Asylum for Idiots and Imbeciles.

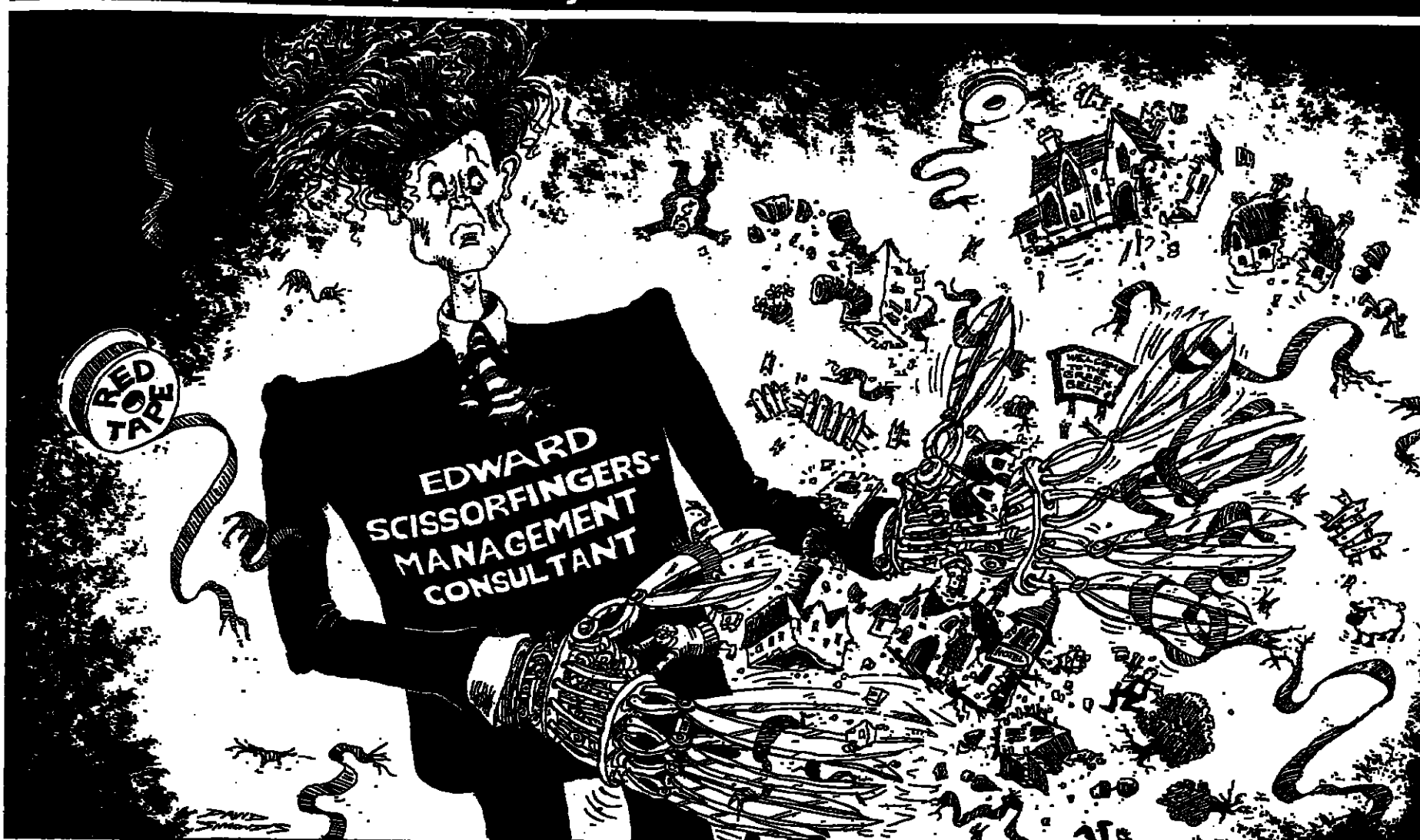
There is also, as frequenters of churchyards know, the omnipresence of death. Life expectancy at birth is 41 for men and 45 for women; though should you live till four you can hope for a further 51 years if male and 53 if female. These are average figures: prospects in the great industrial towns were very much bleaker.

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Low marks for essay in productivity



McKinsey's waste output

Larry Elliott

STUDIES show that tax inspectors, estate agents, traffic wardens, solicitors and journalists are the people we really love to hate. For some reason, management consultants don't feature among the great unloved, even though they seem to be grossly overpaid for stating the blindingly obvious.

And that's just the good ones. There are times when the advice of management consultants can be positively harmful — either because it prevents corporate heads from thinking for themselves or because the advice is simply wrong.

The report by the McKinsey Global Institute, which has been used by the Government to support the case for productivity improvements, falls into the latter category. According to the McGI, Britain has a big productivity gap with the French and German, and an even bigger productivity gap with the United States.

That's right. No kidding. Britain after 18 years in which the country has been a testing ground for free-market experimentation has too many barriers to efficiency and growth.

Whereas critics of Britain's economic performance have argued that weak investment and poor levels of skills (coupled with low growth) are the problem, the report says that these are the consequences of market restrictions. "Although the UK is one of the most deregulated economies in Europe, it retains a plethora of regulations governing the use of land and property that are intended to protect the nation's countryside, high streets and heritage," says the McKinsey Report.

So there we have it. The way to improve Britain's productivity is to bulldoze all those quaint yet over-staffed country house hotels that the tourists love and replace them with Marriott International complete with in-house video channels and mini-bars. Once that's successfully completed the Government can destroy what's left of our high streets and give the green light for an array of shopping centres that will replace the old-fashioned streets — the Green Belt.

Nick Crafts, one of Britain's leading academic experts on productivity, says that if the report had been an undergraduate essay 20 years ago he would have failed it. With today's less exacting standards, he'd give it a 2.1.

A report last week by Rachel Griffith and Helen Simpson of the Institute for Fiscal Studies argued that the McKinsey study may be substantially over-stating the extent of Britain's productivity problem. McKinsey looked at output per worker, which flatters the US because it has higher labour market participation and its citizens work

longer hours. Once capital is included in the equation as well as labour to produce a measure of Total Factor Productivity, the gap becomes even smaller. And once the quality of the capital employed is taken into account, the gap between the US and Britain becomes so small as to be negligible.

That's not to say that productivity is unimportant. Ultimately, living standards are linked to productivity improvements, but we need to know what we are talking about particularly with Western economies becoming ever more service-sector driven. Take the case of a haircut, which may take a barber the same length of time now as 40 years ago. In crude terms, that means output per hour has remained unchanged, but if the short back and sides in the 1950s made you look like an escaped convict and the haircut today makes you look like Tom Cruise, there would be a real productivity gain.

The McKinsey suggestions gloss over this point, and tend to go against the grain of the Government's commendable commitment last week to a new range of quality of life indicators. What's more, the idea that Britain should try to become a carbon copy of the United States looks a bit dubious in the light of America's productivity record.

As a TUC response to the Treasury-backed survey put it: "The US record on work-force productivity (GDP per person employed) has, over the past 40 years, been much worse than almost any European Union state, including the UK."

The TUC argues that data from the West's leading think tank, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, shows that post-1973 UK labour productivity in the business sector was little different before and after the introduction of free-market reforms.

In addition, it says the US productivity was not delivered very little in the way of higher living standards. The average annual increase in US hourly wages in real terms since 1979 has been barely 0.5 per cent, with all but the top fifth in the labour market experiencing cuts in real hourly wage levels.

The TUC says McKinsey's policy recommendations do little to address the real root causes of poor performance — under-investment, skill shortages and poor workplace relationships. The TUC cites an Institute of Personnel and Development study which found a strong link between profitability and the way in which people were treated at work.

Given the TUC's slavish devotion to monetary union, its paper rather glosses over the fact that Europe's higher level of productivity growth in recent years has been at the expense of unacceptable levels of unemployment.

French supermarkets, for example, have few of the low productivity workers in the bag packers and shelf stackers — that you find in Tesco or Sainsbury. That said, though, it has rather more sensible things to say than the McKinsey study.

There are three interlocking factors that need to be tackled if Britain is to improve its productivity record. The first is that productivity growth is linked to overall expansion and the state of the labour market. Companies that cannot catch up with there will be strong demand in the future for their goods, and this tendency is reinforced when labour is dear relative to capital, as it was in the days of full employment.

Second, low productivity appears to be a function of inequality, though it may be, of course, that the relationship is the other way round. A century ago, the rich were able to employ a vast army of domestic servants. That was no longer the case after the second world war, but in recent years there has been the re-birth of a new servant class.

Finally, the supply-side matters. Britain's level of education and skills base compares poorly to that of other European countries. The UK has three times as many children leaving school with only the most basic attainments in literacy. There is obviously a symbiotic relationship between poverty and employability.

To give the Government its due, it seems to recognise the importance of all three of these factors. Nor does it seem over-keen on following the advice of the management consultants. The Pre-Budget Report had a lot to say about stimulating R&D and investment in small companies, not that much about laying tarmac across the Green Belt.

Of course, talk is cheap. The Wilson government tried, and failed, to improve Britain's productivity. Mrs Thatcher only succeeded in boosting manufacturing productivity by sending 25 per cent of it to the knacker's yard.

But the prize is enormous. According to McKinsey, if Britain could catch up with America it would be worth £2,500 a year to each of us. With that sort of money you could hire someone from McKinsey for an hour to sort out your personal finances. But then again, perhaps not.

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West owns up to deep complicity in Asia

Not only the cronies wove basket cases, writes Mark Atkinson

TWO competing causes have been advanced for the Asian economic crisis — hasty financial liberalisation or cronyism. Not surprisingly, the West has chosen to emphasise the latter. By blaming the victims for their own misfortune, it helps western policymakers to sleep more easily. If they had to take responsibility for precipitating the crisis, it might require a fundamental re-think of all that they hold dear.

Yet a special edition of the Cambridge Journal of Economics, published last week, suggests that the West, by imposing its doctrines of deregulation and economic liberalisation on the Asian countries has much to answer for. Although corruption and cosy relationships between banks, businessmen and politicians, may have been endemic in Asia, it was not the primary cause of the crisis, the journal argues.

Rather it was caused by the programmes of financial liberalisation that were undertaken by the Asian countries with Western backing, in the years preceding their downturns, programmes which allowed hot money to flow in and out of the crisis countries to ultimately disastrous effect.

Moreover, in some cases financial liberalisation actually enhanced the opportunities for cronyism by removing some of the safeguards which helped keep it in check.

Take South Korea. Starting in 1980, the Korean government under Kim Young Sam implemented radical financial liberalisation, which led to a rapid build up of foreign debt. Much of this debt, it is over 68 per cent, was short term, making the country vulnerable to sudden swings in capital flows.

Ha-Joon Chang, of Cambridge, Hong-Jae Park, University of London and Chul Gyu Yoo, of Oxford, argue that the inflow of foreign debt fuelled an investment boom,

which led to excess capacity in key industries.

The latter was also made possible by the weakening of centralised investment coordination. In turn, the weakening of industrial policy and the abolition of five-year planning created opportunities for cronyism in key industries.

Indonesia suffered the same fate, according to Jonathan Pincus of the University of London, and Rizal Ramli, Indonesia's leading independent economist. In a joint article, Indonesia: From Showcase to Basket Case, they argue that the immediate cause of the crisis was the spread of contagion from Thailand.

However, they say that the intensity of the downturn can only be explained in terms of the government's progressive loss of control over the financial system as a result of the liberalisation drive.

Indonesian economic ministers installed the developing world's most liberal banking system in the 1980s. It helped fuel the country's rapid economic growth in the run-up to the crisis, but also undermined efforts to stabilise the situation.

The authors are also critical of the IMF for pressing Indonesia to maintain high interest rates and an open capital account despite evidence that these policies were not working.

The softer approach adopted by the IMF and G7 suggests that the lessons of the Asian crisis have begun to be learnt. The authorities have given their blessing to the loosening of fiscal straightjackets. Since Russia's August devaluation, policy makers have also been talking of the need for orderly capital account liberalisation and stronger regulation of international capital markets.

This suggests world financial leaders have begun to acknowledge their complicity in the crisis.

But words have not been followed up with action. One can only hope that discussions about reform of the global financial system are continuing behind the scenes. Unless they are, history threatens to repeat itself.

Cambridge Journal of Economics, Volume 22, Number 6, November 1998. Published on behalf of the Cambridge Political Economy Society by Oxford University Press.

Indicators

TODAY — EU: Franco/German summit, Potsdam.
UK: House of Commons debate on the 1999 budget presented to parliament.
UK: CPS report on services.
TOMORROW — EU: ECB council press conference.
EU: Rethinking managers index (Nov).
IT: PMI (Nov).
UK: PMI (Nov).
WEDNESDAY — IT: Producer prices (Oct).

1999 budget presented to parliament.
UK: CPS report on services.
TODAY — G7: Bundesbank council meeting.
UK: CBI distribution survey (Nov).
FRIEDAY — US: Unemployment survey (Nov).
Source: BBC Newsline

Tourist rates — bank sells

Australia 2.53	Germany 2.7436	Malaysia 6.30	Singapore 2.66
Austria 19.24	Greece 460.32	Malta 0.6173	South Africa 9.28
Belgium 56.80	Hong Kong 12.49	Netherlands 3.063	Spain 232.12
Canada 2.47	India 70.576	New Zealand 3.04	Sweden 13.23
Cyprus 0.8088	Ireland 1.0971	Norway 12.15	Switzerland 2.266
Denmark 10.48	Israel 6.91	Portugal 278.88	Turkey 482.700
Finland 8.42	Italy 2.730	Saudi Arabia 6.12	USA 1.6140
France 9.1708			

Supplied by Reuters (excluding Japan, which is quoted as a separate rate)

Thank the General for Thatcher

Debate
Andy Robinson

IT WAS not just logistical support in the Falklands war which endeared Margaret Thatcher. Before she came to power, Mrs Thatcher sent advisers to look at the general's supply-side reforms. After the 1978 coup, Chile staged the premiere for policies that would later become world box-office hits. Anti-inflationary shock treatment, deregulation and privatisation were tested by Pinochet years before Mrs Thatcher and Ronald Reagan held their own supply-side revolutions. By 1981, Pinochet was crowing: "Seven years ago we were alone. Now we're part of a categoric world trend."

But there are ironies in Pinochet's role in establishing the neoliberal paradigm, not least that the economists he recruited as advisers — famously nicknamed the Chicago Boys — were educated at the University of Chicago, thanks to grants from the United States government.

Between 1966 and 1980, the Agency for International Development — or Aid — provided grants for more than 100 economics students at Chicago, where they studied under supply-side gurus such as Milton Friedman and Arnold Harberger.

Where American state subsidies were insufficient, the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations stepped in. Why was the US so keen to subsidise higher education in such a remote loca-

tion? Easy. It was about the war against Communism. Once they had graduated, the first generation of Chicago Boys returned to Santiago and took up positions at the Catholic University, which had been moved, with US cash, to the foothills of the Andes.

The young supply-siders spread the Friedman doctrine. The best of their students received grants from Aid and set off for Chicago. "Chicago became the legend and the goal," says writer Juan Gabriel Valdés. Locating the new faculty in the Cordillera helped form an "esprit de corps and a missionary zeal" in students, he says.

After Pinochet's bloody coup of 1973, the junta liquidated the Prebischites, the left-wing Keynesians and Marxists who had worked with Allende, and searched for advisers. "There were very good Christian Democrat economists but they wouldn't

swallow the civil rights abuses," says Valdés. "Pinochet wanted advisers who were not too excited and nothing but science." The Chicago Boys waited for him with rational expectations out in the Cordillera, far from the gunshots and sirens of the city centre.

In the following years, 60 Chicago graduates took up government posts under Sergio de Castro, a leading Chicago Boy, implementing a radical programme of supply-side reforms.

By 1981, the Boys were triumphant. Mr Friedman announced that Chile was the "miracle of the decade", and the Wall Street Journal suggested bringing Pinochet's economists in to advise Reagan.

The orgy of backslapping came to an abrupt end the following year, when the Latin American debt crisis crippled the Chilean economy and the financial system collapsed.

A second generation of more pragmatic Chicago Boys took over in the eighties — with mixed results until Pinochet retired as head of state in 1988.

Most of the Chicago Boys have emerged from the Pinochet years with reputations intact. They seemed not to notice the dictatorship's repression, says Valdés, whose book on the Chicago Boys is published next year. The dictatorship gave them 15 years, and 3,000 dead or disappeared.

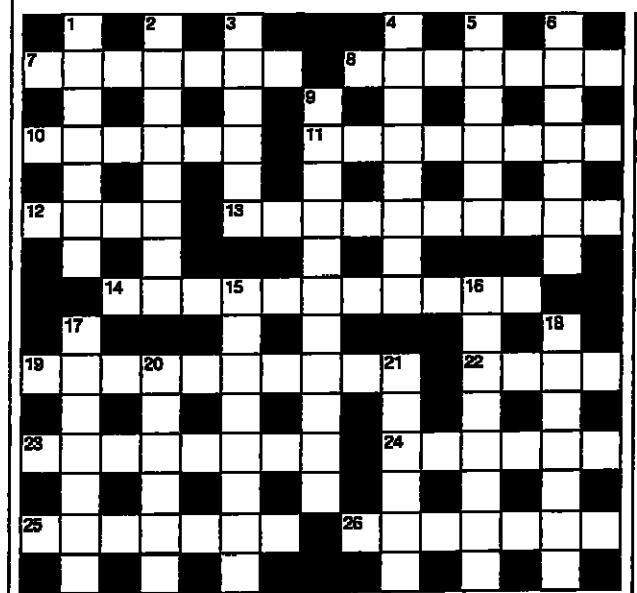
In all the internal documents there is no indication that the abuse of human rights presented a problem for the Chicago Boys, he says. "They didn't even ask one question."



Pinochet: The Chicago Boys never questioned his regime

Guardian Crossword No 21,445

Set by Rufus

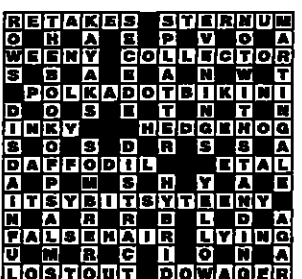


Across

- Shout out various numbers during course of test (7)
- As result of special deal, English railway passed through another station (7)
- Key operators may strike against it (6)
- Lois died broke but greatly admired (8)
- Time that is right for a row (4)
- Spot cash the bookmakers must be prepared to pay out (5-7)
- Intergued at form of non-appreciation (11)
- It may provide accompaniment to "Pinafore" production (10)
- Dreadful of money (4)
- Dude pairs prepare to ride on the ranch (6,2)
- Cats in the pound (6)

Down

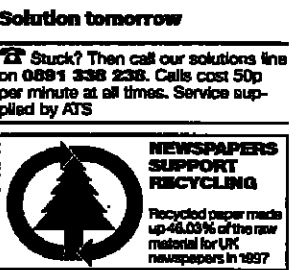
- Left Spain for somewhere in Africa (7)
- To give reasons is no longer simple (7)
- Pressing need for home club (7)
- Billy has hot tip, might make gangster's fortune (6)
- Suggestive of European river rising fast (8)
- Where people make pots on a wheel? (6)
- Intriguing woman had her face painted (7)
- Martin hopes to mix, the very thing he hates (11)
- Firm, lean sort of fighting man (8)
- Upset caused by greed and corruption (8)
- One may be mounted in a ring (7)
- She's a real swinger in Paris (6)



WEEKENDS OF PRIZES PUZZLE 21,445
This week's winners of a Collins English Millennium Dictionary are Brian Riddick of Eastbourne, East Sussex, R. Avey of London, E2, Jane McMorin of Cambridge, Graham Jeff of Easingwold, North Yorkshire, and Alastair Place of Barnet, Hertfordshire.
Please allow 28 days for delivery

20 It sounds bad — not so, he's in the pink (6)
21 Strange noises affecting Greece and Cyprus (6)

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Stating the blindingly obvious, page 11

Tomorrow: How Eurocamp is holding up

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239 9610
Fax: 0171-833 4456

Finance Guardian

Demand for French car firm's 206 model brings boost for West Midlands



The Peugeot 206 was launched at the British International Motor Show in Birmingham in October — sales have outstripped forecasts

PHOTOGRAPH: RICHARD LEA-HARR

1,000 new jobs at Peugeot

Nicholas Bannister, Chief Business Correspondent

PEUGEOT is poised to lift unemployment gloom in the West Midlands with plans to create 1,000 new jobs, with a further 3,000 posts among component suppliers. The French-owned car manufacturer is planning to create a third shift at its Ryton plant near Coventry to meet higher than expected demand for its new 206 model.

Union negotiators have agreed terms for the new shift to start in January and the company is near to an agreement on a small amount of government aid. However, the plan has yet to be approved by the Peugeot main board in France.

The employment boost would come as the West Midlands motor industry is coming to terms with the loss of at least 2,500 jobs at Rover, mostly at the company's ageing

Longbridge plant in Birmingham. BMW, the German owner of Rover, has demanded the cutbacks as part of the price for continuing with its £1.7 billion investment in its British subsidiary.

Peugeot, which makes the 206 at its Mulhouse plant in France and at Ryton, had anticipated increasing the number of shifts in the UK if there was adequate demand but did not expect to be in a position to do so until well into the first quarter of next year.

However, the demand for the 206, which made its UK debut at the British International Motor Show at the Na-

tional Exhibition Centre in Birmingham in October, has exceeded forecasts. It has been on sale in France for seven months.

The Ryton plant already has orders for all its production until the end of the year. The third shift would enable it to increase its output from

2,600 to 4,000 vehicles a week. The biggest threat to the plan to expand Ryton's production is posed by Peugeot's main board whose members are under pressure to create new employment at the company's French plants where jobs have been lost.

Peugeot's UK management hopes that its success with the 206 will help it win main board approval for a second, as yet unspecified, model to be built at Ryton within the next three years. The 206 is seen as a successor to the legendary Peugeot 205, voted Car of the Decade in the 1990s. It is already selling at a faster rate than the 205, sales of which did not really accelerate until the introduction of a GTI model.

The future of Rover's Longbridge works — the largest car plant in the UK — should be decided within the next 10 days.

A delegates' meeting, attended by one representative

for every 100 workers from all of the company's plants, will meet this week to decide whether or not to recommend the deal to its 39,000 workers.

Rover staff are still angry over the way Bernard Pischel-er, the chairman of BMW, overshadowed the launch of the Rover 75 at the British International Motor Show by announcing that Longbridge would close unless a 30 per cent productivity gap between the group's British and German workers was closed.

However, industry sources claim the Rover management should have acted earlier to stem the company's losses of about £500 million a year.

The German magazine Der Spiegel reported yesterday that BMW was to replace several Rover managers with BMW managers following problems with quality. It also said the position of Rover's chief executive, Walter Haselkuss, was under threat.

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Barclays will give fair hearing to predators

Jill Treanor

BARCLAYS faces a barrage of bid speculation today as it begins crucial meetings with disgruntled shareholders after the resignation of chief executive Martin Taylor last week.

The bank, already cited as a potential merger partner for Halifax or Lloyds TSB, is playing down talk of its vulnerability but is expected to listen to any proposals from rivals. Sir Peter Middleton, the board member parachuted in as chief executive, said: "The banking and financial services market is very frothy. There isn't a single bank that isn't thinking about the issue of global consolidation."

Banking sources warn that shareholders may push Barclays into a merger if Andrew Buxton, outgoing chairman, and Sir Peter fail to ease growing anxieties about the bank's management.

Anne Simpson of PIRC, the

corporate governance group, believes the bank's institutional shareholders also need to consider the part they played in the departure of Mr Taylor, who is thought to have left after failing to win support for his radical plans.

"Shareholders need to support a reforming chief executive or chairman," Ms Simpson said yesterday. Shareholders and City analysts will also demand reasons for the £300 - £500 million shortfall between their profit expectations and its statement last week in which it said its profits would be £1.9 billion.

Seeing the plight of Barclays, many corporate financiers are expected to be busily preparing briefs for clients on the possibility of making merger approaches to the troubled bank.

Barclays, with a market capitalisation of some £35 billion, is of a similar size to Halifax, which the market believes is also suffering a

management crisis and which may look to Barclays to build up its strength.

The former building society is known to be prepared to put its £3 billion cash pile to use in a merger or acquisition.

Other financial groups likely to receive the attention of corporate financiers include NatWest, Abbey National and insurer Prudential. A merger rather than a takeover would avoid a huge "goodwill" bill.

Lord Alexander, soon to depart chairman of NatWest, urged Barclays to fill its management positions quickly. "Clearly, what they've done is got their management succession at the top wrong. They have a vacuum, they need to put it right," he yesterday told GMTV's Sunday Programme.

Global consolidation of banking groups is expected to speed up today with confirmation that Deutsche Bank, Germany's largest, has sealed its \$9.5 billion acquisition of Bankers Trust of America.

This week Market jitters expected to hit 130-point Footsie gain

Laurie Laird

IT WILL be another jittery week for the market, after the surprise near-130-point gain last week left the Footsie close to July's all-time highs.

The banking sector will be in the spotlight after the surprise resignation of Barclays chief executive Martin Taylor last week.

The market is preparing for a bid with some observers speculating that the ambitious Halifax could be in the frame. Royal Bank of Scotland reports on Thursday, which will give a clue to the health of second-line banks.

Electronics giant GEC delivers an anxiously-awaited interim report on Thursday, observers hope the group may clear up speculation that it plans to merge with the French Alcatel, revealed in the Guardian.

TODAY — Interim: AEA Technology, Balfour Beatty, Third Quarter: Micro Focus, Fleetstar, Alders, Care UK, Eurocamp, Imperial Tobacco, Nord Anglia Education, Scottish Pacific Holdings, Young Holdings.

TOMORROW — Interim: Ambly Group, East Surrey Holdings, Hachem, Hogg Robinson, Wagon, Fleetstar, Carlton Communications, Charrat Group, Get Group, Sancofin, Scottish Investment, SCS Upstream, Slatisbury.

WEDNESDAY — Interim: Alfa, Baxby, Corroon Holdings, Greene King, Hampson, Intercontinental, JGC, JLS, Heston Group, London International Group, Mid Kent Holdings, Videogame, Fleetstar, Avon Rusbars, Bess, Dewhurst, Royal Bank of Scotland.

THURSDAY — Interim: Abbey, Air, Spring, AIT Group, Barde Television, Exaro International, GEC, GJS, Heston Group, London International Group, Mid Kent Holdings, Videogame, Fleetstar, Avon Rusbars, Bess, Dewhurst, Royal Bank of Scotland.

FRIDAY — Interim: Culture Finest, Dorian Electronics.

Proxy vote survey names and shames

Jill Treanor

MOST shareholders fail to vote at the annual meetings of the companies in which they invest, and many of these firms refuse to disclose the results of ballots — contrary to guidelines set out in the Hampel report.

These claims are made by corporate governance specialists Pirc in the most comprehensive study of proxy voting conducted in Britain. They come at a time when the Government is investigating the role of shareholders in corporate governance. The Department of Trade and Industry is also reviewing company law.

Only 1 per cent of shareholders actually attend meetings and, if they do vote, they do so by proxy even though companies are able to override a proxy vote by calling for a "show of hands".

While Pirc's survey established that only 45 per cent of potential votes are ex-

ercised at the UK's largest 350 firms, that is an improvement on the 37 per cent average during 1996.

Pirc, which is calling for a regulatory and legal reform of voting, found that most rebellions staged by shareholders centre on the pay of senior executives.

The National Association of Pension Funds is conducting an inquiry into proxy voting and Pirc was the first to make its case. It called for compulsory voting and a requirement to disclose proxy votes — Hampel merely made a recommendation. Pirc also wants the "show of hands" abolished.

"Transparency is essential to effective corporate governance," said Anne Simpson of Pirc. Its "name and shame" list of companies failing to disclose proxy voting results includes GEC, British Steel, Boots, HSBC and Barclays.

On the role of honour are BAT, ICI, Body Shop and Marks & Spencer.

Watchdogs warn on disclosure

Jill Treanor

BANKING and securities regulators will today warn the industries that they need to tell the public more about their risky trading activities if they want to avert financial crises.

The Swiss-based central bankers' bank, the Basle Committee, and the securities watchdog, the International Organisation of Securities Commission, issued their edict

weeks after a period of unprecedented turbulence in the world's financial markets.

Much of the upheaval was caused by the involvement of some of the world's largest banks — including Barclays — in the September bailout of the Long-Term Capital Management hedge fund.

William McDonough, chairman of the Basle Committee and president of the New York Federal Reserve, thought to have instigated the rescue of

LTCM in September, urged banks to publicise details of management of exposure.

"This will enable the public to understand not only today's risk positions but also a firm's ability to withstand tomorrow's market volatility," said Mr McDonough.

The banking and securities regulators are now updating their rules on disclosure of trading and derivatives activities. A spokesman said they would be publishing a paper soon.

American Notebook

Simpler rival for Microsoft



Mark Tran

AMERICA Online has struck a blow for the world's techno-plebs by assembling a powerful coalition with Netscape Communications and Sun Microsystems against Microsoft in the race to grab the lion's share of Internet commerce.

Silicon Valley technophiles usually sneer at AOL, based in suburban Dulles, Virginia. AOL is no technological pioneer such as Netscape and technical glitches have made it an object of disdain. AOL sank to its nadir in 1996. It was forced to change its legal but questionable accounting practices, erasing all of its profits. Then it replaced its hourly charges with a flat rate of \$19.95 (£12) a month. AOL's systems were overwhelmed, leaving so many customers complaining about engaged signals that regulators made the company offer refunds.

Yet AOL survived, and has emerged as a potent threat to Bill Gates' Microsoft at a time when the software giant is fighting the biggest antitrust case since the breakup of phone giant AT&T. AOL's resurgence, despite its lack of technological prowess, shows that the Internet era does not necessarily belong to the companies with the most technological savvy.

Bill Gates often complains — justifiably — about the complexity of Microsoft products, but his engineers seem to have trouble hearing the message. The enormous success of Apple's iMac shows the appeal of user-friendly computers and the secret of AOL's success has been simplicity.

AOL's approach to the Internet reflects the background of Steve Case, the company's 39-year-old chief executive, who believes strongly that the service must be easy to try and easy to use. Mr Case started out marketing hair conditioner for Procter & Gamble and then tested exotic new combinations for Pizza Hut, only to find that people preferred plain cheese and tomato.

It is a lesson he applied to AOL. The company has a simple email system, offers news from ABC, the New York Times and cybergossip Matt Drudge as well as sports, weather and personal finance. It is a convenient way of ordering books and flowers and chat rooms abound, catering to anything from lonely hearts to Civil War buffs.

The hard part was building up AOL's customer base of now about 13 million people. AOL sent out software discs by direct mail to millions of computer users, offering them free trials. It was expensive and the churn rate — those who left compared to those who stayed — was high. But AOL did manage to build a clientele.

Companies started to take notice and were willing to pay to tap into AOL's virtual community. CUC International paid \$50 million for AOL to carry its online discount shopping service and 1,400 Flowers bought the flower concession for \$25 million.

On the other hand AOL has success stamped over it. With Netscape and Sun in its camp, it now leads a powerful force against Microsoft. Sun will sell Netscape software to businesses as well as paying \$350 million in licensing, marketing and advertising fees to AOL. AOL has been under-estimated before, but it beat off other online services — CompuServe, IBM's Prodigy and Microsoft's MSN. Since buying CompuServe, AOL captures about 80 per cent of home use of the Internet. Everyone else is now trying to catch up — including the whizz-kids at Microsoft.

Microsoft acknowledged AOL's clout by pushing to have its first browser adopted by the online company.

AOL now reaches as many homes as cable operators. Time Warner or Tele-Communications Inc and has more subscribers than Time Newsweek and US News & World Report combined. AOL is also stealing viewers from television. Users spend an average of 51 minutes a day plugged into AOL, up from 14 minutes two years ago. Those minutes come at the expense of the networks and cable. This made AOL a force to reckon with, so after rejecting previous overtures, Netscape is now prepared to throw in its lot with Steve Case.

Netscape, an Internet software pioneer, has a very different ethos and it will not be easy to meld these disparate cultures. But, as Internet commerce becomes increasingly commonplace, Netscape complements AOL in important ways. Netscape has been moving away from the browser market — it now gives away its browser for free — towards Internet software for businesses and its own Netcentre portal or megaweb site, one of the most popular sites on the Internet. Subscribers to AOL and its subsidiaries, CompuServe and ICQ, as well as visitors to Netcentre, comprise a hefty audience and will allow the combined company to charge advertisers and online retailers top rates to reach large audiences.

US HOUSEHOLDS are expected to spend almost \$3 billion with online merchants this holiday season, up from \$1 billion last year. The rapid growth of Internet commerce accounts for the tremendous surge in share prices of Internet companies like eBay, Amazon.com and iXtreme. eBay is up more than 1,000 per cent on the year. Some of these Internet hotshots can be expected to crash and burn, but AOL, which, unlike these newer companies, actually makes profits appears to have a firm footing.

AOL's first priority in its \$4.2 billion acquisition is to hang on to Netscape's best and brightest, such as Marc Andreessen, one of the brains behind the company's browser. Should he bolt, his exit could trigger other important defections. Netscape's software talent has to decide whether to stay with a company reputed with a techno-pleb reputation.

Netscape's engineers also have to consider an important cultural difference. AOL still bears the legacy of being a closed system, requiring members to install AOL software that includes a browser to log onto the service. Netscape, by contrast, has built a community at its Netcentre site open to any Internet user with any browser programme.

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Pitch produces Ashes roller-coaster



Bailed out... England's Alex Tudor, making his Test debut, bowls Steve Waugh for the first of his four wickets

PHOTOGRAPH: LAURENCE GRIFFITHS

Australia v England: Second Test match

England future brightened by the pace of things to come

Mike Selvey sees mayhem in Perth

IN QUEEN'S GARDENS, the beautiful park that adjoins the Waca, there is a statue of Peter Pan, a replica of the one in Kensington Gardens in London, and the buzzing crowd that strolled out of the ground and past it into a crystal evening yesterday must have wondered whether this was not indeed Never Never Land.

On a pitch the like of which is not to be found anywhere else in the world, this match proceeded at such breakneck speed that had it not been for

a wonderful riposte from Graeme Hick as the shadows lengthened, and the best part of the hours of diligence from Mark Ramprakash, the whole thing might have been done and dusted inside two days, something that had not happened anywhere since the very first post-war Test.

England finished the day on 126 for five in their second innings, still two runs from making Australia bat again. In the circumstances it represented a recovery almost of heroic proportions after the three Australian pacemen Glenn McGrath, Jason Gillespie and above all Damien Fleming had sent England tumbling to 112 all out in 39 overs of mayhem early on Saturday.

Australia, 150 for three overnight and with Mark Waugh already entrenched, had then ground their way to 194 at lunch for the loss only of the nightwatchman Gillespie — just 44 runs from 30 overs.

The second new ball taken one over into the afternoon, a mysterious and foolhardy change of gear by the Australians, and the emergence of a young cricketer of genuine star quality turned things round.

Alex Tudor had got his chance to play here by the skin of his teeth, a talent bursting to let rip but destined to be stifled, it seemed, by intransigence within the selection panel. Had he not played on this of all grounds, England would have left Australia wondering what might have been. Now we know.

From the Members' end, and into what breeze the Fremantle Doctor had prescribed, Tudor, wicketless thus far, lashed in like the young Ian Bishop reincarnate and at genuine express pace took four for 25 in 21 balls: Steve Waugh beaten by sheer pace and bowled; Mark Waugh squared up and caught low down at third slip; Ricky Ponting caught at the wicket off a shorter that screamed past his chest; and McGrath the perk at the end.

At the other end Darren Gough, devoid of luck on this tour but with a soulmate now, puffed out his chest and ripped in to take two wickets.

Six Australian wickets tumbled in 55 uproarious minutes of the most heartening adrenalin-powered bowling from an England strike force operating in tandem since the days of Willis and Botham. A lead of 128, then, where it might have been many more.

The England second innings began as disastrously as the first, for with the pitch picking up even more pace on the second day, Fleming Test-best figures of five for 46 in the first innings — removed Mark Butcher, Nasser Hussain and Alec Stewart inside 10 overs before tea and added the wicket of Mike Atherton after the interval.

Playing courageously and with intent, Atherton contributed all but five of the 40 runs scored while he was at the crease, twice looking his nemesis McGrath to the square boundary and hitting four more boundaries besides. His dismissal, a blameless one, and the tame one of John Crawley, a shortening victim of Colin Miller in his off-spin guise, seemed to have settled things.

Instead Hick, in the side only because of Graham Thorpe's back injury, and out to a second-ball duck in the first innings, played thunderously. His first ball from Miller was lashed through point and when Mark Taylor then turned to Gillespie the first bouncer was top-edged

Scoreboard

ENGLAND	
First innings	
M A Butcher c Healy b Fleming	0
M A Atherton c Healy b McGrath	1
N Hussain c Healy b McGrath	6
J P Crawley c Healy b McGrath	38
M R Ramprakash c Taylor b Fleming	4
G A Hick c Healy b Gillespie	0
D G Gough c Taylor b Fleming	2
Tudor not out	18
D Gough c M E Waugh b Fleming	10
A D Mullally c Healy b Fleming	11
Extras (incl. w.o. mch)	6
Total (20 overs)	112
Fall of wickets: 2, 4, 19, 57, 74, 74, 81, 81, 108	
Second innings	
McGrath 16-4-37-3, Fleming 14-3-46-5, Gillespie 7-0-23-2, Miller 2-0-4-1	
AUSTRALIA	
First innings	
M A Taylor c Stewart b Cork	61
J L Langer c Butcher b Gough	34
J L Langer c Crawley b Ramprakash	10
M E Waugh c Butcher b Tudor	38
J N Gillespie c Stewart b Mullally	11
S R Waugh b Tudor	33
R Ponting c Stewart b Tudor	11
R A Healy b Gough	0
D W Fleming c Hick b Gough	0
D R Miller not out	2
G D McGrath c Cork b Tudor	0
Extras (b.t. mch)	24
Total (59.2 overs)	240
Fall of wickets: 11, 15, 48, 67, 78, 108, 126, 208, 228, 238	
Second innings	
Gough 25-9-43-3, Cork 21-5-40-1, Tudor 20-3-45-0, Mullally 21-10-36-1, Ramprakash 2-0-12-1	

ENGLAND	
Second innings	
M A Butcher c Ponting b Fleming	1
M A Atherton c Taylor b Fleming	35
N Hussain b Fleming	1
J P Crawley c Taylor b Fleming	0
M R Ramprakash not out	28
J P Crawley c Langer b Miller	15
G A Hick not out	42
Extras (mch)	6
Total (for 5, 47 overs)	128
Fall of wickets: 5, 11, 15, 48, 67	
To bat: D G Gough, A J Tudor, A D Mullally	
Bowling: McGrath 17-6-30-0, Fleming 11-5-16-4, Gillespie 9-1-29-0, Miller 4-0-11-1	
Umpires: D J Harper and S Venkataraghavan	

uncontrollably over the wicketkeeper Ian Healy.

When Gillespie changed ends to come downwind, however, Hick murdered him, pulling his first delivery high over midwicket for six, cutting the next ball for four and pulling the third for six again. In all 33 runs came from the over, and by the day's end Hick had made 42 from only 33 balls — already the second-highest score of the game after Taylor's 61 — and he had added 59 in 11 overs for the sixth wicket.

Whatever the outcome England will take some positive things from this game. But, as in Brisbane, much of their predicament was self-inflicted. Six catches were missed, including Taylor on 38, Michael Slater twice, on 15 and 25, and Steve Waugh on 11 and 20. Gough, Tudor and Alan Mullally, who bowled exceptionally yesterday with no luck, deserved better reward for their exertions.

What was disappointing was the inability of the top-order batsmen to learn from the state game they played here. The pitch, they know, requires a unique mental and technical approach by which any delivery from a pace bowler on or just outside the off stump and on a good length or shorter must be allowed to pass through to the keeper.

It is about having a game plan and the discipline to carry it out and, as Mark Waugh demonstrated yesterday morning before he and his twin lost patience after lunch, it is a potentially tedious process against top-flight bowling. Good balls, many of them, have been bowled by the Australians, but bad shots have been played as well. That, like the standard of catching, is unacceptable in a series where England need every ounce of good fortune they can muster.

Paul Allott, page 15

Scottish round-up

Celtic hot on the heels of the leader

Patrick Glenn

CELTIC seem to have been clinging to championship contention in the way that Indiana Jones hung on to that lurching truck on the north African desert, but in the past week they appear to have taken a grip with their feet as well as their fingers.

The 2-0 home win over Motherwell on Saturday, following the 5-1 thrashing of Rangers, has reduced the gap with the leaders to four points, even if the Ibrox side have a match in hand.

More significantly, their latest success was the first time since February that they have won back-to-back league matches; the achievement will surely have deepened the belief of players and supporters that a sustained challenge over the season is now possible.

There is, too, the prospect of important players such as the midfielder Craig Burley, the central defender Marc Rieper and the goalkeeper Jonathan Gould returning from long-term injuries. Added to new signings such as Lubomir Moravcik, Johan Mjallby and Vidar Riseth, the head coach Jozef Venglos will have some tasty options in the coming months.

Moravcik, the 33-year-old Slovakian, has already demonstrated his virtuosity with both feet in the four matches he has played since his arrival from MSV Duisburg while Mjallby, a tall, powerful Swedish midfielder from AIK Stockholm, has been very effective in defence in the two games — coincidentally, the successive victories — in which he has participated.

Both were upstaged once again against Motherwell, however, by the electric Henrik Larsson, Mjallby's countryman, who scored the first just before the interval and made the second goal for Phil O'Donnell when the game was only four minutes into the second half.

"People keep talking of turning-points," said the sensible, ever-quotable Larsson, "but we have a lot of games to win before we can talk in those terms."

"Rangers still have a good lead and we have much to do. But we are playing well again and we have some very good, intelligent players here."

Things are much less rosy for Alex Miller, the Aberdeen manager, who heard calls for his dismissal from disaffected fans after goals from Kjell Olofsson, Joe Miller and Craig Easton had given Dundee United a 3-0 victory at Pittodrie.

Aberdeen are now sharing a laggy bottom place with Dunfermline, who were whipped by the same score at home to second-placed Kilmarnock in a match which featured a double from the veteran Ian Durrant and a single from Gary Holt.

Scottish League Cup final



Sharp left... Jorg Albertz gets in ahead of John McQuillan to fire home Rangers' winner after 37 minutes at Celtic Park

PHOTOGRAPH: ALAN HARVEY

Rangers 2 St Johnstone 1

Albertz, the crowned prince of Ibrox Park

Patrick Glenn sees Rangers lift their first trophy under Dick Advocaat's management

IT WAS not exactly the nightmare revisited but St Johnstone, as expected, had to endure further pain at the hands of Rangers at Celtic Park yesterday.

Much more spirited and coherent, and blantly less collusive than they had been in the 7-0 hiding they took from the same opponents only three weeks earlier, the team from Perth lacked only the little wedge of luck that might at least have taken the match into extra-time.

They did enjoy territorial advantage for lengthy periods, however, and those travelling fans who sang, "We love you, Saints" throughout the game were not exhibiting misplaced affection.

Having conceded the first goal so early that a loss of

nerve induced by bad memories would have been understandable. St Johnstone regrouped so successfully that they were level within two minutes and spent most of the time thereafter matching the Ibrox side in most areas.

"This gave us a little taste of what we can achieve and hopefully we can do it again," said Sandy Clark, the St Johnstone manager.

"We tried to warn the players what the atmosphere would be like in this situation but there was still tension and, as we feared, the only way you can know how to play it is to experience it. But after falling behind we came back quickly."

It was in attack that Rangers looked more dangerous, even during Saints' periods of ascendancy. Rod Wallace, Andrei Kanchelskis and Stephane Guivarc'h were quicker than Miguel Simao and George O'Boyle at the other end. More significantly, they were supported by mid-

field players more effective in the business of pushing forward at pace.

The exception to this general rule was Jorg Albertz, who managed at once to do hardly anything and everything during his 65 minutes on the field. Largely anonymous and at times appearing worryingly lethargic, the German still managed to stir himself just long enough to score the winning goal.

"Everyone expected us to win. We had done well against them before, but a third time is always difficult"

That effort eventually was a relief to the Rangers support, who had anticipated another emphatic victory over opponents their team had already beaten by an aggregate 11-0 in two league games this season. That expectation had been heightened by the early goal from Guivarc'h.

The move began with Sergio Porrini's lobbed pass forward to Kanchelskis on the right. The Russia international held off Gary Bolland as

he made his way to the dead-ball line and, from near the post, delivered it knee high to the Frenchman whose volley flew past Alan Main.

That was an impressive finish but nothing like as spectacular as the one produced by Nick Dasovic — the Man of the Match award winner — for St Johnstone just two minutes later. Paul Kane's free-kick from the right was headed down by Alan Kerr.

Barry Ferguson slipped the ball towards Albertz in mid-field but he allowed it to run through his legs to Guivarc'h who waited until the German had moved forward before releasing the return ball which Albertz, with the help of a feint deflection, swept past Main with his left foot from the edge of the area.

It was only the second cup final in St Johnstone's 114-year history and having lost the 1969 League Cup final 1-0 to Celtic, they are now sought for two. Rangers should be sated by previous successes but, to their whooping support, this one may be interpreted as an encouraging portent for what lies ahead under Dick Advocaat.

"I felt no pressure to win, I don't know why," the coach said later. "Walter Smith did a great job for Rangers but that is the past, and it's not counting any more. I am so pleased for our fans because it costs a lot of money to come to games, and again there were thousands here for us."

"It is a great feeling. Everyone expected us to win but we had to do it. We had done well against them before, but a third time is always difficult."



Six pack... Hick dispatches Gillespie

PHOTOGRAPH: BEN CURTIS

01 1/2

ATP Tour Championship



Staying power... Alex Corretja fights back from two sets down against Carlos Moya in the Hanover final yesterday

PHOTOGRAPH: MICHAEL PROBST

Corretja is king for a day as he triumphs in long Spanish dispute

Stephen Bierley in Hanover sees a final comeback worthy of crowning the year

IT IS no good pretending that yesterday's all-Spanish ATP Tour Championship final between Alex Corretja and Carlos Moya, a rerun of this year's French Open, was to the liking of many. Indeed German television switched off its live coverage in the middle of the fourth set for "Wintergarten", a brand new entertainment programme that was obviously just too good to delay.

Viewing figures for the tennis had been poor all week and with Pete Sampras and Tim Henman beaten on Saturday there was obviously neither the will nor the inclination to stick with a final that lasted four hours. And so a "Winter Garden" it was, with ATP Tour officials furious.

What a pity, for Corretja's epic 3-6, 6-4, 7-6, 6-3, 7-5 victory (and Corretja is the Cecil B De Mille of the Tour) was an extraordinary contest which Moya had more than half won before his countryman's astonishing comeback.

Moya's dashing good looks, shoulder-length hair, baggy clothing and huge paddle feet are more than enough to single him out on any court, yet it is the quality of his shots, notably a searing forehand, the intensity of his serve and his athleticism which suggested that here

beaten Henman. Moya warned: "I will have no friend this time. I'm going to fight to the death."

Perhaps he should have kept his mouth shut for it was Corretja, the shock semi-final winner over the world's No. 1, Sampras, who fought to the death, dropping to his knees at the close and holding his racket in front of him as if it were a religious icon. Moya sank on his chair and tried to

comprehend the incomprehensible. It was a defeat that will sorely trouble the 22-year-old Spaniard, the youngest in the eight-man field, for months to come.

Unlike Moya, Corretja is not a charismatic figure, but like Moya he has taught himself to play on hard courts and indoors by sheer application. He first came to prominence two years ago when he all but defeated Sampras in the quarter-finals of the US Open, a match which saw Sampras on the point of collapse.

Then, on his way to this year's French Open final, Corretja defeated Argentina's Hernan Gumeni in a third-round match lasting 3hr 37min. The man's capacity for tennis elbow grease is extraordinary.

Until last year Corretja had never won a match indoors — until he defeated Henman in Paris. So Britain must take some credit for this triumph. Of course, Henman beat him in the round-robin stage here. Indeed, had last year's rules applied, Corretja would not have been in the semi-finals. He alone the final, Greg Rusedski, who won both his matches as first reserve, would have played Sampras.

So Corretja became the first player to win the event, formerly the Masters, at the first attempt since John McEnroe 20 years ago. That he saved the best for last, particularly Sampras on Saturday should

have warned Moya of his impending fate. "Alex is hitting the ball real heavy," said Sampras. For Moya the blows were sledgehammers.

Before this year's tournament in Lyon, which he won, Corretja had a 1-12 career record indoors, which made yesterday's victory even more extraordinary and further emphasised the increasing stature of Spanish tennis.

Corretja ends the year as the world's No. 3, behind Sampras and Chile's Marcelo Rios, with Moya at No. 5. Henman's opening victory against an injured Rios had lifted his confidence immensely, but his first serve never functioned properly all week and against Moya on Saturday he was prone to malfunction, let him down at crucial moments in his 6-4, 3-6, 7-5 defeat.

Nevertheless it was a match he should have won, having broken Moya's serve in the opening game of the third set and established a 3-1 lead. So Henman finishes the season at No. 7, his highest ever, with Rusedski at No. 9. Both left here considerably richer. Henman by £151,000 and Rusedski by £165,000.

They will face the new year with considerable confidence, the Wimbledon title being their prime objective. But what would they give now for a quarter-share of Corretja's saving power, particularly Sampras on Saturday should



Losing feeling... shared by Sampras, left, and Henman

Cricket

Paul Allott in Perth sees a 21-year-old fast bowler of enormous potential make the most of his first Test appearance for England

The day young Tudor rose from the Ashes

THE permanent aquamarine sky in Perth provides the brightest, purest light imaginable in which to play cricket. England, though, have played this game in a fog, battling with an incompetent mixture of dither and dash in their first innings and then compounding the folly by dropping catches off their persevering and perspiring bowlers.

Shining light and English cricket may not go hand in hand but, if the bright light and quick pitch of Perth has thrown up an intriguing if condensed Test match, then England's bold selection of Alex Tudor has catapulted a sparkling new talent into world cricket.

Rarely have I felt as excited or as riveted by a session of Test cricket as during the post-lunch period yesterday.

England had their backs to the wall, starting at almost certain defeat and, worse, total humiliation at the hands of Australia. The second new ball was their only hope, in the hands of the bold and bouncy but unlucky Darren Gough and the young, gifted and very fast Tudor. The Waugh twins were looking solid and the Aussies were 194 for four with the power to add: experience taking on youth and naivety.

Tudor steamed in upwind and bowled as he had been picked to do: he bowled fast. He disappeared for three boundaries in his second over, dispatched by the phlegmatic elder twin Steve, renowned as the most enduring batsman in the world.

One ball changed the mood. A searingly quick bouncer seemed to unsettle the senior Waugh, who became Tudor's first Test victim next ball, bowled by an equally fast, pitched-up nip-backer. Mark followed next over to give the 21-year-old a pair of Waughs

as his first successes. Not a bad place to begin.

Tudor's rise to Test-match status has been remarkable. He has played in only 26 first-class games and possesses a rare talent. The ability to bowl fast is almost guaranteed to accelerate progress and Tudor bowls extremely fast.

He was picked for this tour of Australia as England's 17th man, with little prospect of playing much and basically along for the ride. Refreshingly he says: "I didn't come here for work experience. I saw it differently, as an opportunity to play cricket for England."

His chance came due in no small part to the hard work he has put in in the nets, constantly giving his team-mates the hurry-up and impressing everyone with his wonderful attitude to the whole process of touring. His batting has come under the tutelage of the team manager Graham Gooch and the impact was obvious

during his little cameo of a knock in the first innings. Tudor looks and moves like an athlete. He has a graceful yet aggressive run-up and delivers the ball from his full height.

Bob Willis considers him a tremendous prospect and the quickest English bowler he has seen in recent times. And Willis had a part in persuading him to join Surrey rather than Middlesex some two years ago.

Tudor's father also works at The Oval as a security officer, and his elder brother Ray was formerly on the staff as well. There was an injury shadow over the young Tudor for part of last season but, after the way he announced himself to the world in this game, all doubts in that quarter have been dispelled.

In the extraordinary first two days' play Tudor took only two balls to make an impact, his second a delivery thudding into the chest of Mark Taylor. Immediately Australia had received a warning of his potential.

Several qualities stood out through his first-innings performance. Pace, yes, most certainly, but his line was so good too and also his application. So often young quick bowlers, finding themselves on a fast pitch, explore only the middle of the wicket, reveling in and relishing the bounce, often wasting all their energy. But Tudor used his short deliveries sparingly and kept to an admirable full length for much of the innings.

Four for 89 from 21 overs may not seem a stunning analysis but in context they are remarkable figures for a young man of so little experience. David Lloyd, the England coach, had the last word: "Alex bowls big boys' pace, and England have found a fast bowler today."



Tudor... searingly quick

Mugs no longer as Olunga puts Zimbabwe in the box seat

ZIMBABWE were left seething after their first Test victory overseas in 15 at Harare in 1982, courtesy of their fast-improving pace pair Henry Olonga and Mupfema Mbangwa, who routed Pakistan for 103 in their second innings.

The tourists reached 79 for one before bad light halted proceedings early on the third day of the first Test.

Murray Goodwin stroked six delightful boundaries in his unbeaten 34 and Grant Flower hit five fours in his 24 not out, the pair adding 57 before play was called off 12 overs early.

This constituted a considerable turnaround from the morning, when Zimbabwe lost their three remaining first-innings wickets for 20 to be dismissed for 238 and hence trail by 58, Wasim Akram (five for 52) sending back Neil Johnson (107) with the second ball of the day to become only the eighth man to aggregate 350 Test victims.

In bundling Pakistan out for their lowest total in Tests between the teams, Mbangwa had career-best figures of three for 23. Only a 57-run seventh-wicket stand between the former wasp and Akram (31) and Akram (31) spared Pakistan's blushes, reviving them from 41 for six.

Akram's dismissal triggered a further slide, the last four wickets falling in 22 balls. Alistair Campbell, Zimbabwe's captain, urged caution none the less. "The job is not yet over. Wasim and Waqar [Younis] are two great bowlers and it will not be the easiest task on a difficult wicket."

South Africa v West Indies: First Test

Pollock punch winds Windies

Andy Capostagno in Johannesburg

SHAUN POLLOCK achieved the double of 1,000 runs and 100 wickets at the Wanderers yesterday and also gave South Africa a potentially decisive edge in the first Test against the West Indies.

The 25-year-old Pollock, playing in his 26th Test, wrapped up West Indies' second innings at 107 with the wickets of Ravi Lewis and Courtney Walsh in three balls to reach the 100 mark, having previously scored his 1,000th run. Only Ian Botham (21), Vinoo Mankad (23) and Kapil Dev (25) have achieved the feat in fewer Tests.

Pollock's efforts left South Africa needing 164 on today's final day for victory. Resuming 13 runs ahead, the tourists quickly ran into trouble as Pollock and Allan Donald produced a fiery opening burst. Philo Wallace dragged on against Pollock in the second over, Brian Lara was trapped leg-before by one from Donald which kept low and Shivnarine Chanderpaul also fell lbw as West Indies lost five wickets before lunch.

Although Clayton Lambert lasted nearly three hours, he fell in the session's penultimate over, caught behind off the off-spinner Pat Symcox. Ridley Jacobs, making his debut as wicketkeeper at 31, and Carl Hooper, batting with a runner, and down at No. 7 because he had been off the field with a groin strain, added 68 for the sixth wicket between lunch and tea whereupon both lost their wickets in successive overs before the interval. Symcox and Pollock snipped off the tail with the last three wickets falling

without addition in four balls. Pollock's four for 49 gave him a match haul of nine for 103 and a welcome return to form after a moderate tour of England during the summer.

South Africa, unable to start their second innings because of rain and bad light, will be aware, on a pitch that has played lower and lower — there were five lobs in West Indies' second innings — that the target could prove more awkward than it looks.

Only once since their return from isolation in 1992 have they scored more than 164 to win a Test. Hansie Cronje, too, will be haunted by the memory of Bridgetown in 1993 when, in the only previous meeting between the sides, South Africa needed 79 to win on the last morning with eight wickets standing.

Curly Ambrose and Walsh claimed them for just 25 runs. **WEST INDIES** First innings 281 (5 Chanderpaul 74; Pollock 5-54). **SOUTH AFRICA**

(Overnight from Friday: 217-8)
1st G Vintcent b Ambrose 41
2nd V Vintcent b Lewis 12
3rd P Symcox run out 25
4th A Donald c Jacobs b Ambrose 7
5th C Hooper run out 3
6th R Lewis b Pollock 2
7th S Chanderpaul 258
8th S Chanderpaul 258
9th S Chanderpaul 258
10th S Chanderpaul 258
11th S Chanderpaul 258
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Snooker

Stevens fights back

Clive Everton in Bournemouth

MATTHEW STEVENS, appearing in his first major final, won the last three frames of the afternoon to take a 5-4 lead over the world No. 1 John Higgins into the concluding session of their best-of-19-frames final of the UK championship at the International Centre.

Higgins managed to lead 3-1 at the mid-session interval despite an abrupt dip in form after a first-class opening frame. And a break of 50

put him 4-2 ahead before his 21-year-old Welsh opponent scored 106 to close the gap. Higgins then looked set to regain his two-frame lead with a grating 60, including eight blues, but he failed to escape from one of the snookers Stevens needed and then went in off.

Stevens cleared the colours for a black-ball win to draw level and, after Higgins missed a simple straight red, he made, to secure the last frame of the afternoon.

Perhaps the world champion's mind had been clouded, less by the £75,000 first prize

than the historical resonance of completing a world and UK title double achieved by only Steve Davis, Stephen Hendry and John Parrott.

For whatever reason, he was certainly more uneasy than in turning his 4-3 deficit into a 9-4 semi-final win over Paul Hunter on Saturday evening, although the 20-year-old Yorkshireman contributed to his own demise by missing easy balls in frames eight and nine.

Stevens is attempting to become third Welshman, after Terry Griffiths and Doug Mountjoy, to win the UK title.

Squash

Nicol boost as he undertakes historic quest

Richard Jago in Doha

PETER NICOL received a double boost yesterday when he began his attempt to become the first British man to win the world title.

Not only did the Scot advance past Pakistan's Khalid Mahmood 15-11, 15-6, 15-3 but his prospective third-round opponent, the world No. 9 Mark Chaloner, went out.

Chaloner is the Englishman who upset Nicol in the British National Championships in January on the very day the Scot became world No. 1. They were due to meet again on Wednesday but

Chaloner, who has recently had a knee operation, faded disappointingly after winning the opening two games against the 32th-ranked Australian Billy Baddrell.

The defending champion Rodney Eyles, of Australia, is struggling to retain his title. The third seed overcame Britain's Paul Hurread 15-7, 5-14, 14-17, 15-10 but had to work surprisingly hard to do it.

Meanwhile there was off-court news when the Australian John White announced that he intends to play in the Scottish National Championships next week. The world No. 19 qualifies for a British passport and could join forces with Nicol and Martin Heath to give Scotland a formidable trio at the next World Team Championship.

Ice Hockey

Steelers draw blank to stay rock bottom

Vic Batchelder

SHEFFIELD STEELERS' dismal season continued when they lost 3-0 at home to the Bracknell Bees, a result which left the Yorkshire club rooted to the bottom of the Superleague.

Even the debut of their new signing Jason Hayward could not help the Steelers, who failed to score for the first time this season. Bracknell, who arrived late after being delayed by roadworks, had to wait until the third period for goals by Sal Manganaro, Colin Ward and Jeff Johnson to clinch victory.

There were contrasting fortunes for next Saturday's B&H Cup finalists, Ayr Scottish Eagles and Nottingham Panthers.

At Cardiff, Ayr were beaten 7-4 despite recovering from two 3-0 down when Shawn Byrne, Mark Woolf and Kerry Bisset scored within three minutes to level the score. But Merv Priest restored the Welsh team's lead 30 seconds later. Ivan Matulik and Kip Noble then gave them a 6-3 advantage going into the final period when goals from Ayr's Jeff Head and Cardiff's Mike MacWilliam completed the scoring.

Nottingham overcame a sluggish opening at home to Newcastle, who led 1-0 through Glenn Mulvenna's fourth-minute strike. But goals from Jarret Zukowsky, Jamie Leach, Greg Hendon and Randall Weber within the first five minutes of the second session put Panthers on course for a 7-4 win.

Hockey

Canterbury's sting in the tail from Mathews

Pat Rowley

CANTERBURY came from two goals down to win at Southgate for the first time in their history and take a two-point lead at the top of English National League a week before the winter break.

Southgate were unlucky not to be awarded a last-minute penalty but the turning point was the dismissal of Todd Williams, their Australian captain and full-back, for no discernible reason. It could well have been a case of mistaken identity but it proved costly with Canterbury capitalising by scoring twice in his absence to win 3-2.

Williams and Jon Shaw had guided Southgate's much-changed team into a 2-0 lead in 18 minutes. But before half

time the home side presented Canterbury's David Mathews with a gift goal. He also clinched the match for Canterbury with a powerful flick from the former Olympic star Sean Kerry had come on to set-up Mark Hollingworth for an equaliser.

The champions Cannock moved above Southgate into second place after winning 3-2 at East Grinstead. Bob Crutchley scored the decisive goal three minutes from time from an end-to-end move.

The cup finalists Beeston, unbeaten since October 11, must be beginning to entertain hopes of making the top-four play-offs. They moved up to fourth, their highest position so far, with a 5-2 win over the bottom club Brooklands. Two more goals by

Craig Keegan took the Australian's tally to seven in three matches. It is all change at the top of the First Division with Barford Tigers as the new leaders after Dharminder Singh scored three in their 5-1 demolition of Sheffield.

The Women's English League reached its winter break with Ipswich Ladies three points clear of the champions Slough and well ahead of the rest.

Ipswich gained a 4-1 win at Olton, and Slough, without Karen Brown and Sarah Kelleher, beat Leicester 5-3 and Doncaster 3-0. A hat-trick by England's Mandy Nicholson against Doncaster made her the third-highest scorer in the league's history with 66 goals, behind Tina Cullen (85) and Jane Swinnerton-Ions (70).

Basketball

Huggins misses the Spanish imposition

Christian Bright

WHATEVER visions England had entertained of inflicting a shock defeat of Spain on Saturday had vanished completely by half-time, especially in the case of Roger Huggins.

Spain were not a quarter of the way towards their eventual 74-58 victory in the European Championship semi-final round when Huggins was led off, blood seeping from a wound beneath his left eye.

The scores then were 15-10 to the unbeaten Group C hosts in Leon, Huggins having contributed four of England's points. By the time he

returned, Spain were leading 32-13. One glimpse at the scoreboard convinced the 6ft 7in forward that his eyesight had failed him while he was being stitched up.

"I was a little bit amazed," he said. "When I saw that scoreboard I thought I wasn't seeing properly."

His sight was unimpaired: while he was away Spain had produced a 26-3 burst, helped by the visitors' inaccurate shooting and awful passing.

The onslaught had begun when Steve Bucknall failed to reach a ball from John Amaschi. Roberto Duenas promptly scored for Spain and, when Ray Carter squandered a simple jump shot, Alberto Herreros sank a three-

pointer, part of his 20 points for the Spaniards. "We looked pretty bad in the first half," Laszlo Nemeth, the England coach, admitted. "It had been chaos in the ranks."

Fortunately for Nemeth, both Amaschi and Bucknall improved dramatically. Amaschi added significantly to his dismal pre-interval contribution of three points to finish as the game's top scorer with 21, five more than Bucknall, whose six successes from the free-throw line just before half-time sparked England belatedly into life.

England take on Honved Budapest tonight en route to their next Group C engagement in Kiev on Wednesday when they face Ukraine.

Liverpool 2 Blackburn Rovers 0

Rovers make difficult case for treatment

Ian Ross sees the Reds' recovery gather momentum

JACK WALKER, Blackburn's Rovers' benefactor and chief decision-maker, would be well advised not to dwell too long on whom he intends to invite to fill his club's managerial vacancy.

Unfortunately for Walker and for those who hold dear the Lancashire club, Harry Houdini is no longer with us and thus cannot be considered for the post.

It was only 3½ years ago, ironically at yesterday's venue, that the team which Jack built were crowned champions of England.

But much water has passed beneath many bridges since that day and this morning Blackburn are marooned at the foot of the Premiership — a club which has lost its manager, its way and the plot.

Finding an individual im-

Match stats

	Liverpool	Blackburn
Possession	51%	49%
Attempts on target	5	2
Attempts off target	6	6
Corners	5	7
Fouls	20	16
Offsides	6	3
Bookings	1	1

bued with sufficient confidence to assume control at Ewood Park may prove rather difficult. And, even with Uncle Jack's generosity, it is a most demanding task.

Prospective successors to the sacked Roy Hodgson should have spent yesterday afternoon wandering around Anfield's main stand, for it was there, wearing no boots but frowns, that those players who will shape Blackburn's immediate future were to be found.

Of the eight men ruled out because of injury or suspension, six would certainly have made it into the team which was sent out by the most polished caretaker manager in British football, Tony Parkes.

Not for the first time in recent seasons Parkes was asking boys and notices to undertake the work of men; this time it was beyond them. "I could be in charge for two or three weeks but I think the people who matter inside my club have got the message that something has to be done quickly this time," he said.

Parkes added: "Bearing in mind the team we put out, I thought we did tremendously well. Things will improve — we must be looking for better times ahead."

West Ham United 2 Tottenham Hotspur 1

Harry's just wild about Ginola

Martin Thorpe

A WEEK which began with Harry Redknapp fearing for his authority at Upton Park ended with the West Ham manager happy to take second billing.

For a heady 24 hours the Hammers were at the top of the table for the first time since 1986 and, though they dropped to third yesterday, it is a credit to the club that they are vying with the Premiership Goliaths.

David did almost bring them down, but in the end Ginola's sumptuous skills could not deliver Spurs the victory their domination perhaps deserved. Despite being under the cosh for long periods, the durability that now runs through West Ham's once easy team helped them pocket their 13th point from the last 15 on offer.

The Hammers fans are so used to seeing their dreams fade and die that they have even enshrined it in a song. But now the team's future looks promising, so long as the board can resist temptations such as the increased £5 million offer for Frank Lampard contemplated by Spurs.

But even Redknapp was happy to accept that Saturday's star was Ginola. The West Ham manager has been sold a few dummies in his time — Raducioiu, Futre, Boggers — but even he was left drooling over the Frenchman's Premier Cru skills. "You are the best player, you are fantastic," swooned Redknapp as he laid his hands on Ginola's shoulders as he bumped into him after the match.

"He's a dream, he's got everything," expanded Redknapp later. "My boys have come off and said, 'What do you do with him? He goes left, he goes right, he's strong as an ox, he's quick as lightning, he's

Liverpool's confidence is so fragile that unless they are provided with the comfort of an early goal tends to spread through their ranks like dye through still waters.

As is now the norm, their initial hesitancy manifested itself in some extraordinarily nervous football. Despite the determined efforts of Jamie Redknapp, there was to be no link between a defence which still cannot be trusted and an attack which must be sick and tired of trying to grow fat off unappealing crumbs.

Blackburn, you suspect, knew all too well that they were starting a drubbing full in the face but, even so, it was only a matter of 10 minutes or so before they were enveloped by the warm feeling that the team before them in red shirts were similarly bedeviled by problems.

That the team which Gérard Houllier is attempting to knock into shape cannot defend, either individually or collectively, is common knowledge, but even so the lack of such an impoverished Blackburn team initially threatening to prosper was wholly unexpected.

When your back is pressed against the wall moving forwards does represent an attractive proposition and this is what Parkes's boys attempted to do.

Had Blackburn scored during an opening 20 minutes when neither side held sway the afternoon may have held at least a measure of intrigue. But it was not to be.

In fact, once Liverpool had moved in front just before the half-hour the argument was all but at an end.

Blackburn's reserves were content to avoid a hammering. Liverpool were happy to log only their third league win in 10 weeks.

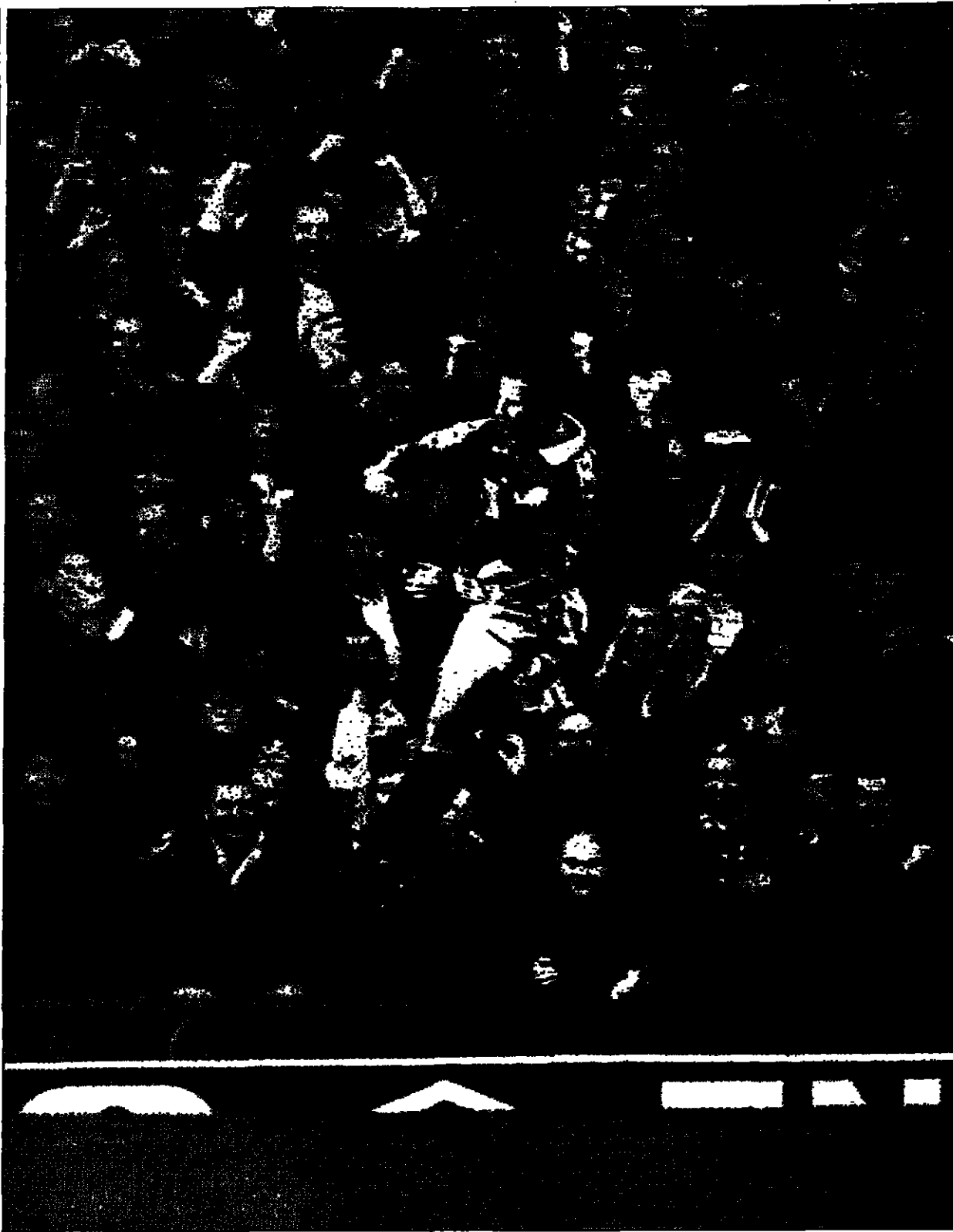
"This result does not mean that we are healed because it will be a long process," said Houllier. "Today was better but it wasn't perfect. We are in a period of convalescence but it isn't finished just yet."

Paul Ince's goal was always likely to provide a tepid game's one abiding memory for he can rarely have struck a sweeter shot — a ferocious right-footed drive which drifted away from the Blackburn goalkeeper John Flann before striking the inside of a post and going in.

Three minutes later Blackburn's stout resistance was over when Flann blocked a Michael Owen drive only to look on helplessly as the rebound fortuitously cannoned off the teenager's knee and over the line.

And that, rather sadly, was that. No more goals, no more entertainment.

File under dull and predictable.



High flying... Butt jumps for joy in front of an ecstatic crowd after scoring the winner

PHOTOGRAPH: CHARLES KNIGHT

Manchester United 3 Leeds United 2

No buts from Ferguson but Butt tips the balance

David Hopps

ALEX FERGUSON had unmistakably thrown down the challenge yesterday, warning that he would be "examining in every detail the attitudes and standards" of a Manchester United side whose Premiership challenge has been undermined too often by the rival attractions of the Champions League.

Even such notably hard taskmasters can put with de-light on occasions and Ferguson was delighted by this response. There is no more passionate challenge to United than that provided by their rivals from across the Pennines. They had to stretch every sinew, burst every lung before victory was achieved.

This was Leeds's Nou Camp. Manchester United might have gained plaudits for a thrilling midweek draw in Barcelona but Leeds sensed the opportunity to cause further embarrassment to a side whose Premiership lapses, according to Ferguson, had been "unacceptable". The manager having drawn the

line, his players defended it to the last man; they had to.

Only 12 minutes remained of an enthralling contest when United summoned the winning goal that swept them back into second place, Aston Villa's lead now only a point.

Appropriately it fell to Nicky Butt, precisely the sort of fringe senior player at whom Ferguson's words had been most directed, his first goal of the season coming as he swirled just inside the area to beat Paul Robinson with a rasping drive. "He has had a mixed season but today he was our best player," Ferguson said. "It was a fantastic result for us, and the most entertaining game I've ever known against Leeds at Old Trafford."

Leeds, finally, were spent, but their first away defeat in the Premiership this season brought upon them considerable credit, as they were disturbed defensively by injuries to Martin Hiden, who may be absent for a month with knee ligament trouble, and to their goalkeeper Nigel Martyn, who succumbed to a back injury after an outstanding first half in which he pulled off as

many breathtaking saves — three — as Andy Cole spurned chances.

Butt had looked in disbelief at the best of these saves, with the game still goalless, Martyn leapt prodigiously to claw his header on to the bar, his back injury suffered as he fell on to his far post.

In Ferguson's search for "freshness" this was a United side with their wings clipped: no Beckham, no Blomqvist and Ryan Giggs only appearing as a second-half substitute. Leeds drew encouragement, tackling furiously in central areas and breaking in numbers, their strikers Harry Kewell and Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink back to their sharpest.

Leeds survived Ole Solskjaer's appeals for a penalty, when he fell under Gunnar Halle's challenge, before Hasselbaink provided them with a half-hour lead. Hasselbaink, entirely unrecognisable from the craggy, flabby figure of a few weeks ago, drove determinedly in from the left and his powerful low shot creased into the net off the inside of the near post.

Martyn winced in pain at every drop kick, patted balls at

his feet into touch in near despair and saved excellently from Solskjaer and Cole in between swigging down a couple of painkillers hurried round by his manager, David O'Leary. His last duty, though, was to pick the ball from the net. Solskjaer receiving Dwight Yorke's pass to beat him with a low, angled drive.

For Martyn to survive the half was one thing, to emerge for the restart practically impossible. He gave way to his teenage understudy, Robinson, who through no fault of his own was beaten within 10 seconds of the restart, Roy Keane sidefooting into the roof of the net after Paul Scholes had sped outside Ian Harte.

That Leeds could summon another response in the face of such mounting casualties seemed unlikely, but within six minutes they were level.

Kewell, full of vim throughout, capitalised upon an error by Wes Brown and his left foot finish over Schmeichel was delightfully composed. Robinson's saves then kept Leeds alive until the moment that brought Butt's season alive.

Chelsea 1 Sheffield Wednesday 1

Booth steps on the blue suede shoes

David Lacey



David Beckham

are improving steadily, but Vialli's team were commanding the game by half-time and ought to have won it.

Instead they slipped into old sloppy habits: the passing became careless and the movement up front congealed. Wednesday deserved the point secured by Andy Booth's goal in the 88th minute and had he taken two earlier chances they might even have won.

Not since Alan Hansen and Mark Lawrenson were at Liverpool has a team with championship aspirations offered so much quality playing from the back. Late in Saturday's game Frank Leboeuf found Dan Petrescu with long crossfield passes of such perception and accuracy that you wanted to wrap it up and take it home.

Petrescu controlled the ball at a touch but then dragged his shot wide. That moment rather summed up Chelsea's performance which, as Vialli admitted, was not one of their best. "For 80 minutes we did well," he said, "but then we lost our shape a little." Then he consoled himself with the observation: "Last season we would have lost that game; at least we have kept the run going."

True enough, Chelsea's record is an unbeaten sequence of 19 matches in all competitions but the coming month

will surely test the currency of their title pretensions. On Wednesday week Aston Villa visit Stamford Bridge and Chelsea play Manchester United at Old Trafford.

Around Christmas, with a home game against Tottenham in between.

If Chelsea are still in the top three or four going into the new year then the chances of the championship coming to the Bridge for the first time since 1955 will be real indeed. But on Saturday's evidence they are just as likely to slip up against the struggling teams as drop points to their closest rivals.

A lapse in concentration would surely have seen Wednesday take the lead in the first minute had Booth, unmarked, been gathered by Alexander's low centre. But Booth shot wide after Carbone's through pass had caught the defence square but he took his shot sharply enough after a neat exchange of passes on the right by Alexander and Danny Sonner.

Favel Snieck kept Wednesday in the match with a series of excellent saves but Chelsea's goal just before the half-hour recalled Danny Blackburn's description of Norman Uphill, Northern Ireland's alternative to Harry Gregg in the Fifties: "We called him the cat because he gave us kittens."

Snieck used his own defence by palming a centre from Celestine Babayaro towards an unguarded far post, where Gianfranco Zola scored with a rare header. It was more than the much taller Tore Andre Flo, subdued by the excellence of Thorne and Des Walker, achieved all afternoon.

Match stats

	Chelsea	Sheff Wed
Possession	55%	45%
Attempts on target	5	1
Attempts off target	13	4
Corners	12	4
Fouls	9	16
Offsides	1	4
Bookings	1	2

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Southampton 0 Derby County 1

Saint David struggling to make pipe dream a reality

Adam Hills

DAVE JONES has a dream: Roberto Baggio finds his way around the drop in wages and decides to swap Juventus for Southampton, Serie A for a good old-fashioned relegation dog-fight.

The only thing that is black and white for the Saints manager right now is how fanciful such thinking is, however. "We've not got an abundance of money so we're competing in a certain market. I would love to buy an Italian centre-forward or bring in Duncan Ferguson but how does a club like us do that? Look at what Aston Villa have spent and it's probably more than this club has in 10 years."

With 12 players missing through injury or suspension, Saints had a patchwork look and their cover was not strong enough to avoid a morale-sapping defeat.

The failed attempts to buy Darren Barnard and Joey Beauchamp did not help their build-up and Jones did not issue a ringing endorsement of Carlton Palmer, whose move to Barnsley also fell through last week. "I can't afford to get rid of him, I've only got 17 fit players."

The collapse of Barnard's

move was because the player and the club were "a million miles apart" over personal terms, according to Jones. "There are funds available to buy," he said, "but there are around 10 other Premiership clubs looking in the same market. The best players in England cost a lot of money so we've got to look abroad."

Terry Cooper, the former England full-back, has been made European scout. With two Belorussians impressing on a trial last week, a Moroccan international Hassan Kachoul making a solid debut and Cooper looking forward to his roving brief, Saints may soon begin to resemble the multinational make-up of Derby. They had an Argentinian, Horacio Carbonari, to thank for the 1-0 win despite the impression that a Costa Rican, Paulo Wanchope, had handled the ball in the build-up.

But the lacklustre win raised the fortunes of County, leaving them in ninth place and their manager Jim Smith wishing "that it was the end of the season."

Jones could only reflect on three abortive penalty claims and a refereeing performance which he described as "hobnobs, and if you need that translating it means crap."

Nottingham Forest 2 Aston Villa 2

Merson blow makes Gregory rethink

Russell Thomas sees the leaders again suffer through defensive weaknesses

IT will seem like insult added to injury for Paul Merson but the forward's misfortune was followed by his Aston Villa team-mates in a match raising fresh doubts about John Gregory's current formula for success.

Merson is Gregory's big signing at £2.75 million and Villa's manager predictably talked up the importance of the 30-year-old player who will see a specialist this week to combat a puzzling back injury he has suffered for around seven weeks. "Paul could be out for a week, it could be a month," said Gregory with the air of a man fearing the worst. "I'm very concerned."

Gregory now has to decide whether it is Merson's lack of fitness or his formation, which he has changed to accommodate the player as a third forward, that is at fault for the frailties now threatening his team's leadership. The misgivings about the team's balance in the Liverpool defeat arose

again at half-time at the City Ground.

Perhaps Gregory believes that Villa now have the firepower in the long term to offset reduced defensive security. But here Villa ensured they would remain leaders for a 12th week only through two scruffy, arguably invalid, goals that mocked Forest's surprising control of the game. With Stan Collymore cast down with a stomach bug, and Dion Dublin for once looking mortal, missing glar-



Dublin... mortal after all

ingly in stoppage time, the unused and unsettled Julian Joachim was in the right place at the right time. Or twice in five minutes, to be precise.

Merson, after an inconspicuous 45 minutes, effectively decided half-time was the right time to stand down. "He felt he was letting the lads down playing like that," said Gregory, who brought on Alan Thompson. The substitute slipped into a more efficient Villa midfield.

Nevertheless, individual errors by Villa defenders abounded as Chris Bart-Williams scored with an angled shot and Dougie Freedman, supplied by Pierre van Hooijdonk's quick pass, drove high past Michael Oakes. Gareth Southgate looked less than imperious and Gareth Barry less than his publicity would suggest. Sixteen goals conceded in six Villa games tells the transformed story.

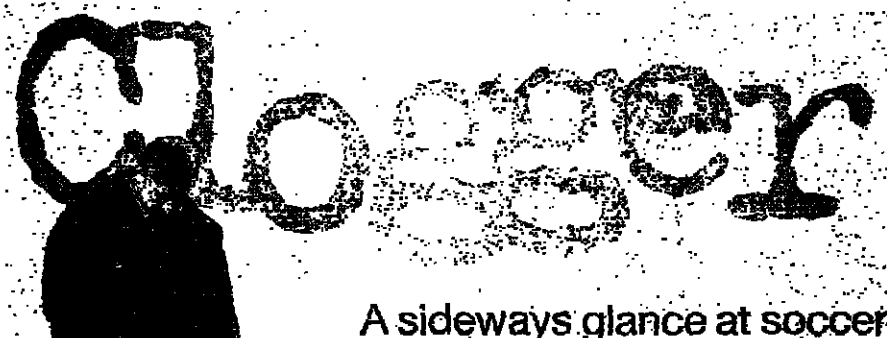
Villa can scarcely afford such generosity against Manchester United next Saturday and, possibly, against Arsenal a week later in two home games that will reveal much about Gregory's tactical ability and the character of his players. Forest's manager Dave Bassett, in typically forthright mood, says Villa are not flattered by their place. "Can they stay there? Course they can. They've got some bloody good players."

Villa's quality, and Gary Willard's questionable refereeing, left Bassett bemoaning the loss of one of the Premiership upsets of the season, leaving Forest without a league victory for three months. Bassett correctly queried Dublin pulling Jon Olav Hjelde out of the way before Joachim tapped in his first goal and, less obviously, the Villa forward's alleged high challenge on Dave Bassett as the two collided amid penalty-area pinball. The striker recovered quicker to complete Villa's starting comeback.

Bassett faces questioning at Forest's agm today, but the manager delivered his own vote of confidence in the players, which even the knowledgeable van Hooijdonk's impressive first-half contribution. "The players have been excellent; they've worked hard in training. No one is talking about relegation here."

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The collapse of Barnard's



A sideways glance at soccer



Their kit don't fit
No. 56 Arsene Wenger

Bad luck for the Arsenal manager on Wednesday night. He obviously picked up the coat that had had its pockets filled with stones as a practical joke by his happy-go-lucky, fun-loving squad.



The Touted As England Boss XI
They seemed to have the right qualities

Roy Hodgson Did well on the continent you know
Brian Clough Lots of caps, speaks very nicely
Gerry Francis "People's favourite" throughout the Seventies
Howard Kendall Long hair, but knows about keeping it tight
Dave Sexton Shortlisted between fifth and sixth Everton spell
Howard Wilkinson Decent, quiet, wouldn't have picked Alan Hudson
Steve Coppell Talks technical with the best of them
Ron Atkinson Very polite, but a bit too odd for England
Trevor Francis Come potential too scary for FA bigwigs
Kevin Keegan Appeared for his man management skills
Kevin Keegan Ruled himself out as Taylor successor. Oh well.

A life in pictures

Alan Shearer's pout



Southampton Tetchy
Blackburn Aggrieved
England Resigned
Newcastle Disgusted

Ask the experts

Was Sue Thea's Match Of The Day explosive a first for football TV coverage?
It may or may not have been the first to be broadcast on air, but the incident reminded me of a report in the late, lamented Paul magazine about the 1974

World Cup. They recounted how the London Evening Standard sent the playwright Willis Hall to watch the panel of experts in action on and off camera. Next to Hall's article in the Standard was a caption which said: "Derek Dougan — addresses charged with majestic eloquence." According to

the Paul reporter Steve Tongue (now a BBC radio reporter), it turned out that Dougan kept on saying "Oh shit!" **Eric Rice, Aldershot**
Each week we will print answers to a selected question. This week: What is the most patently absurd or controversial refereeing decision ever made? **Chris Collins, Edinburgh**
Send answers and further questions to the address below.

State of the nation

United States

Population 250 million
Unlikely champions Washington DC United (1997), who somehow escaped the fate of being known as the Washington Werewolves or some other alliterative atrocity.
National player stereotype Probably a goalkeeper, definitely keen, fresh-faced and college-educated.
Pioneer One of the few executives to the rule was Roy Wegerle, who signed for Chelsea from Tampa Bay in 1986 and proceeded to rack up almost as many clubs as countries he was qualified for.
Important import John Harkes, was the first to emerge from the domestic system; the first to score at Wembley; and the inspiration for a headline that sums up transatlantic sporting incompetence: "Harkes signs for Sheffield, Wednesday".
Stranger in a strange land Cobi Jones was Coventry's post-1994 World Cup gamble, but possibly he was confused by the coaching. "We don't mind him going on those 70-yard runs of his but he needs to do it closer to the danger area," his manager Phil Neal said.
Keeping tabs The US have at times had as many as four goalkeepers in England vying for a place in the national team: Brad Friedel, Casey Keller,

A-Z of British football

P... is for Plucky: a handy euphemism for "losers", which neatly covers FA Cup underdogs and English clubs in Europe.
Classic usage: "PLUCKY Portsmouth went out to lucky Liverpool on penalties and something precious in FA Cup football disappeared." — David Lacey
Ian Pearce and Duncan Sommer Keller once explained their problem with not being "you use your hands." Some thought to tell Keller "you can't do it with your hands" and Pearce replied: "I can't do it with my hands either." — David Lacey
Underachievement Perhaps the closest Keller has got to achieving anything was when he was a Sunday Express football pundit at the old Don. "She found it surprising," he said. "Contribution to world football is not being a player." — David Lacey
Long place for winning: English players selected for the World Cup. "I was a player for 10 years and I never won a game." — David Lacey
Scoundrel in a Who Do They Think They're Winning? — David Lacey

Refwatch

Steven Lodge
Home town Burnley
Home town's other claims to fame Football team boasts crashing bows from Dickie Bird to Michael Parkinson as fans.
Occupation Local government officer
Hobbies Squash, keep-fit, gardening, cricket
Trademark gesture Looking anxiously towards the stewards as 15,000 incensed Southampton and Derby fans shouted, "You don't know what you're doing!"
Saturday's highlight Considering his options for around 30 seconds after a foul, a scuffle and a word with his assistant. A throw-in was his bizarre decision.
Brandishes cards in the manner of... a static version of Alan Shearer's one hand in the goal celebration.
The gaffer tapes "There are no easy games and we aren't going to win every one but it was nice to win with a clean sheet."
George Burley of Ipswich takes a commanding lead in the "Sick as a Parrot" league. But, remember George, it's a marathon not a sprint.
"Some of the dummies he threw even sent me the wrong way — and I was sitting in the dug-out."
Henry Ronsavelli enjoys David Galloway's performance. And last week's report with Peter Storie proved he knows a thing or two about throwing dummies.

Cup of winners



Here is a British club in action in the ECWC in a famous tie of the 1990s. But who was the famous player from the team in white who missed the match? Post, fax or e-mail your answer to the address below to win your choice of this month's new titles from the Football Book Club (0171-561 1608 for a catalogue). Please include a phone number.

Refwatch

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Premiership: Newcastle United 3 Wimbledon 1

Ferguson homes in to send the Toon into new flights of fancy

Michael Walker
sees a quick double dividend from Gullit's surprise signing

GIVEN the splendour of his name, it always seemed likely that Alf Rothwell would be the man to speak to when a dose of common sense was needed amid frenzied optimism breaking out on Tyneside.
So it proved last week that when everybody else was cooing about the £8 million capture of the bird man of Barlinnie, Alf was sought out by Newcastle's evening paper and administered caution and wisdom in equal measure.
AFC in his role as secretary of the North of England Football Union, warned Ferguson that whereas he would probably settle in quickly at Newcastle United, his pigeons' happiness was less certain

Match stats

	Newcastle	Wimbledon
Possession	57%	43%
Attempts on target	11	5
Attempts off target	10	4
Corners	9	4
Fouls	15	10
Offsides	5	8
Bookings	1	0

and depended on "how much time Rued Gullit wants to give Duncan for his hobby". Alf sounded worried.
Ferguson's excitement was immediate — it took the Toon Army all of nine minutes to chant his name — but Alf's concern for the striker's birds was justified. If Ferguson continues in such manic fashion Gullit will not let him out of his sight, lifts not lofts being the manager's priority.

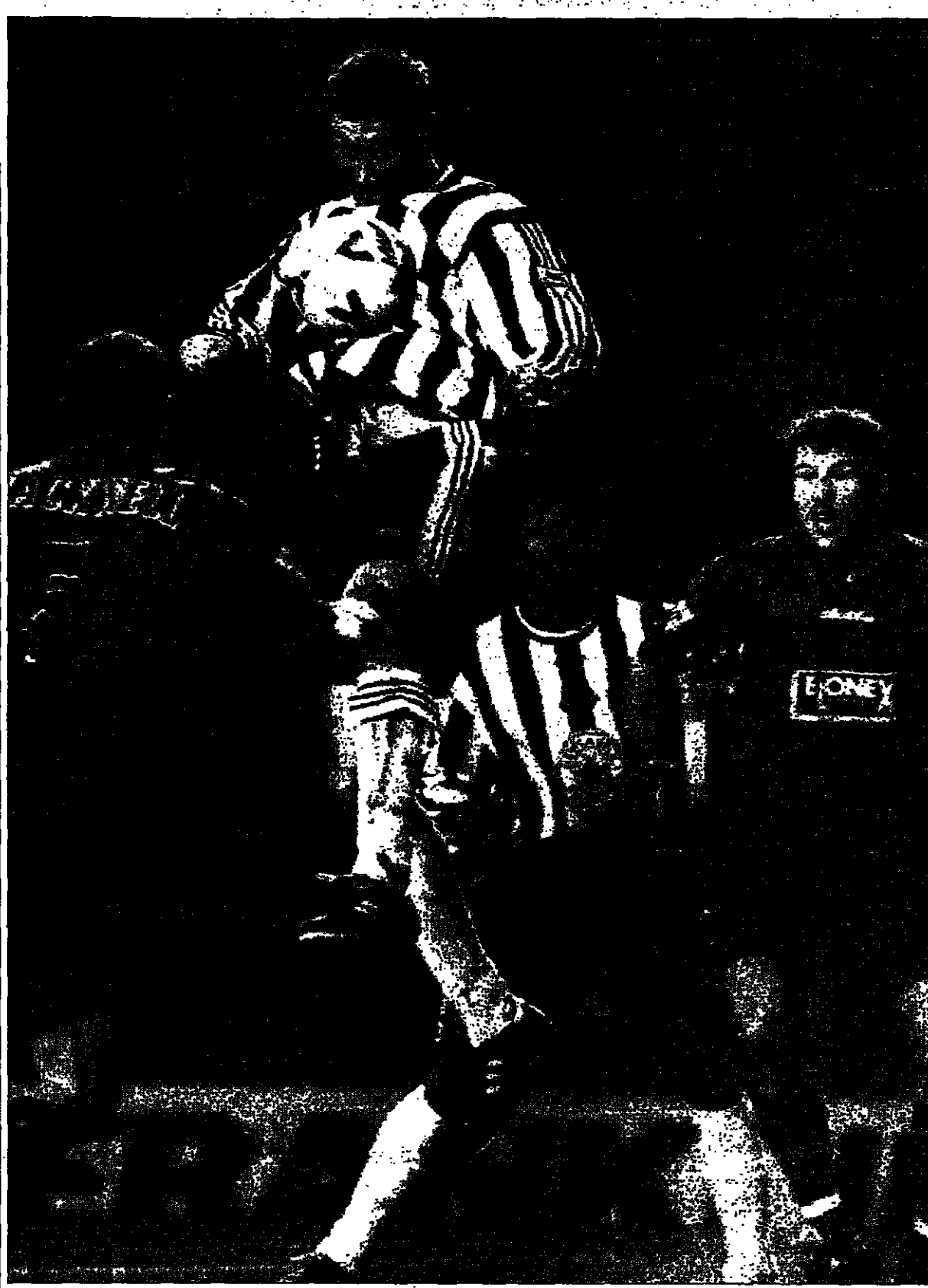
"Everybody at the club has been given a lift by Duncan," Gullit said, "the players and the fans. Everybody is excited. He is a charismatic figure and he has brought a positive vibe to the club." Yes, but had the big Scot's signing given Gullit himself a lift in an otherwise difficult time?
"No, I came by car."

Apparently that passes for humour in Holland but, after such an arid time since his arrival, maybe Gullit deserved the last laugh for once.
Eight days ago, in a frank assessment of the players he had inherited, Gullit identified only four of Kenny Dalglish's huge squad around whom he could build a potent future. From the back they were Shay Given, David Batty, Robert Lee and a Steve Bowyer who, at a Saturday, moments after Wimbledon's Neil Sullivan dived over Ferguson's soft header to make the score 3-1, none of the Newcastle Four was on the pitch.

The victory was ensured by an alternative quartet. Steve Harper, having replaced the injured Given at half-time, was assured in goal and just in front Steve Bowyer was what a centre-half should be: commanding in central midfield, despite contributing the pass from which Marcus Gayle blasted Wimbledon ahead, Gary Speed had his best game for Newcastle.

Wimbledon were undisturbed. Gayle's emphatic finish brought a merited lead, but after 37 minutes Keith Gillespie at last got around Ben Thatcher to deliver a centre of some potential. Ferguson could not oblige but Nolberto Solano, substitute for Stephen Glass, volleyed past Sullivan. Wimbledon still dominated the interval, though, and the explanation for their relative collapse after it would have been worth hearing had Joe Kinnear been willing to supply it.

Kinnear was presumably miffed at the ease with which Ferguson was allowed to score two undistinguished goals. "I'm made up," Ferguson said in his best Scotch, "and Everton won." The most famous hobby in football did not get a mention, Alf.



King of the air... the £8 million Duncan Ferguson climbs above an admiring pack at St James' Park. PHOTOGRAPH BY LEE SMITH

Coventry City 1 Leicester City 1

Coventry peep into the future

Mark Tollerant

THESE are transitional times at Highfield Road as the club strive to adjust to life after Dion, so much so that one of the Coventry men known as in Dublin's Fair City, will be able to record that the current Coventry captain Gary McAllister turned in a performance against Leicester which must have had the watching Scotland manager Craig Brown wondering what might have been if the midfielder had been fit for national service in France last summer.

McAllister, for whom this was only the eighth first-team game back after 10 months on the sidelines with a cruciate injury, was at the centre of everything Coventry did. Admittedly his 33-year-old legs tired towards the end but his foraging runs, incisive passes and superb vision had given his team an edge which would have seen them easy winners if their finishing had been up to standard.

"I think we are still capable of creating chances," McAllister said later. "Any team would be a player of Dion's presence, but we have to vary it a bit and try to get the ball to Darren Huckerby's feet more."

It was Huckerby's head, though, which gave them the lead when he latched on to a flick-on from Trond Sollied, a midfielder turned forward for the day in place of the injured Noel Whelan, and knocked the ball past Casey Keller from four yards.

Batty's £4.5m return to Leeds

primed for quick sealing

DAVID BATTY's adviser

Yesterday said he has cancelled all business appointments for 48 hours in an effort to rush through the England midfielder's £4.5 million move from Newcastle to Leeds.

Batty handed in an official transfer request on Friday because he is desperate to return to Elland Road and the club he served for more than six seasons before transfers to Blackburn and then Tyneside.

A deal looks almost certain to go through this week in time for Batty, 30 on Wednesday, to make his debut at home to West Ham on Saturday.

Hayden Evans, speaking after Leeds's 3-2 defeat at Manchester United, said: "I'm expecting Leeds and Newcastle to contact one another tomorrow. We'll just sit tight and wait for Newcastle to say, 'Go and talk to Leeds. I cannot see any stumbling block.'"
Evans revealed that Batty will waive a substantial amount of money owed to him by Newcastle in an effort to speed the move. "When a player puts in a written transfer request, he doesn't get the remainder of his signing-on fee."

Charlton Athletic 1 Everton 2

Cadamarteri out of the shadow

Trevor Haylett

THE former chairman of a small club, about as popular then as Peter Johnson is now, used to justify his regular visits to the transfer market to his other asset by quoting the "magical 10 per cent". He argued that the player promoted from the reserves to fill the void would raise his game by that amount and therefore little would be lost.

Amid the shedding of tears on Merseyside and the understandable managerial indignation that followed Johnson's decision to recoup £8 million of his investment in Everton through the sale of Duncan Ferguson, it was perhaps easy to overlook that out of the big man's shadow could emerge two strikers, Danny Cadamarteri and Ibrahim Bakayoko, both eager to claim their percentage.

The two goals that gave the Merseysiders a third Premiership away victory will have done wonders for Cadamarteri's confidence and much to sway those Goodison doubters who wondered if the promise he showed a year ago could be maintained. He began by setting alight Everton's right flank and it was shortly after he switched wings that he put them on their way.

For his first the 19-year-old nipped ahead of Sasa Uroic, who recklessly had raced yards out of his goal. His second, struck within 60 seconds of Charlton's equaliser, again required a steady nerve after Uroic failed once more in dealing with a high ball.
Before that Bakayoko, be-

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Copy in 1520

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The Guardian Sport

Monday November 30 1998 www.football.guardian.co.uk

Stewart's foot-shooters suffer a roller-coaster weekend



Lie back and don't think of England... Darren Gough's frustration is all too plain after dropping Australia's Ricky Ponting during the tourists' headlong descent towards defeat in Perth

LAURENCE GRIFFITHS Mike Selvey, page 13

A real cracker at the Waca

AFTER an afternoon of wackiness at the Waca complete with Dick Dastardly (aka Damien Fleming), England began the third day of the second Test in Perth today up a creek and all but paddle-free. Having taken Australia's last six first-innings wickets in as many overs to trail by 128, the first two-day finish in any Test since 1946 loomed as Fleming reduced them to 67 for five. Graeme Hick and Mark Ramprakash averted that at least, taking 23 off a Jason Gillespie over, one shy of the Test record, to cut the deficit to two by stumps.

Seething Smith on point of leaving Everton

Ian Ross

WALTER SMITH is on the verge of resigning after another row with Everton's chairman Peter Johnson. The manager is expected to announce this morning that he is to leave the club only five months after being installed as the successor to Howard Kendall.

Unless Johnson makes a public statement accepting full responsibility for the controversial sale of the Scotland striker Duncan Ferguson to Newcastle last Monday, Smith will almost certainly tender his resignation and walk out.

Although Ferguson's £28 million transfer was negotiated and ratified without Smith's knowledge or consent, Johnson has so far steadfastly refused to confirm as much.

Since the chairman agreed to sell Ferguson in an attempt to reduce Everton's mounting overdraft he has held at least two, possibly three, meetings with Smith in the hope of placating the former Rangers manager.

During the course of the last one, held in London on Friday evening, Johnson agreed to issue a statement which would in essence have confirmed that Smith was not involved in the sale of Ferguson — a cult hero at Goodison. However, much to Smith's disgust, Johnson has so far failed to issue any form of explanation.

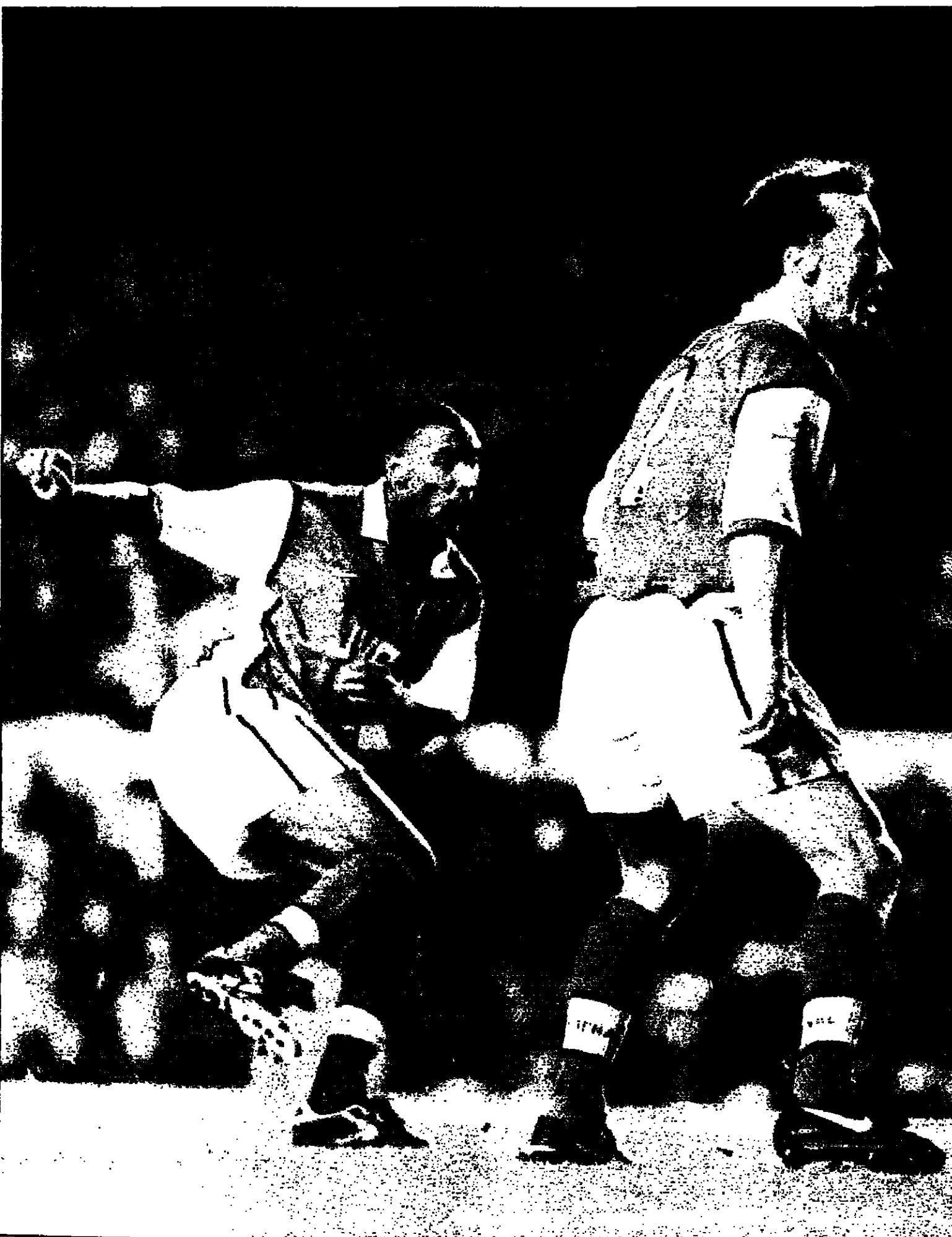
The relationship between the two men has now deteriorated to such an extent that unless Johnson breaks his silence this morning Smith, and presumably his assistant Archie Knox, are likely to inform the Everton board that they believe their positions to be untenable.

Johnson's decision to offload Ferguson has sparked such anger on Merseyside that the multimillionaire businessman is known to be seriously considering his future within football.

He is now believed ready to stand down as Everton chairman — possibly to be replaced by the highly respected Sir Philip Carter — and is known to be actively seeking a buyer for a 68 per cent shareholding which is conservatively valued at £55 million. If Smith does stand down, Everton will almost certainly install the club's veteran captain Dave Watson as caretaker manager once again.

Premiership: Arsenal 1 Middlesbrough 1

Deane slip fuels Highbury mirth



End of the famine... Lee Dixon looks on as Nicolas Anelka scores Arsenal's first league goal for 533 minutes

PHOTOGRAPH: TOM JENKINS

David Lacey on Wenger's mighty sigh of relief as Anelka's late goal comes gift-wrapped

THESE days Middlesbrough are nobody's fools whereas Arsenal, in their present impoverished state, would appear to be anybody's meat. Yesterday's draw at Highbury, therefore, brought Bryan Robson's team less satisfaction than might normally be the case for a promoted side holding last season's Double winners on their own ground.

In fact it was more a case of Arsenal holding Middlesbrough. The champions' first goal in five matches did not arrive until the penultimate minute, by which time the gauche ineptitude of their finishing had driven their supporters first to anger and then to uncontrolled mirth.

Paradoxically an error by Brian Deane, who had given Middlesbrough the lead in the fifth minute, led to Arsenal's salvation. Until then Boro's three central defenders — Colin Cooper, Steve Vickers and Gary Pallister — had dealt comfortably with everything in the air, but when Remi Garde lobbed the ball towards the penalty area Deane, back to support them, missed it completely.

Nicolas Anelka brought the scores level off the underside of the crossbar and Boro spent the two minutes of stoppage time defending untidily as Arsenal sought one of the season's less likely victories. Highbury's obvious relief at the draw, both on and off the field, was a measure of how far Arsène Wenger's side have fallen in the past month.

A lengthening list of injuries has been the main problem, doing nothing to restore form and confidence which were already on the wane. Yesterday Arsenal were missing what amounted to the core of last season's successful team: Tony Adams from defence, Patrick Vieira and Emmanuel Petit from midfield and Dennis Bergkamp from attack. Stephen Hughes, one of the better alternatives, was also unfit and Nigel Winterburn had to go off midway through the first half with a leg injury.

Casualties, however, are not the whole story. Wenger's squad always lacked the strength in depth to mount a decent challenge in the Champions League while keeping up appearances in the Premiership. Now, with their dwindling hopes in Europe finally ended by Lens in midweek, they face a winter of domestic rehabilitation.

Yesterday, for the most part, they did not look capable of winning a three-legged race even though much of their football around the opposing penalty area was played in the manner of men tied together at the feet. In-

tially neat approach work was let down by misplaced final passes and poor centres, but as the crowd grew impatient so some of Arsenal's less experienced players became nervous and apprehensive. By the closing stages Fredrik Ljungberg, so fundamental to Sweden's victory over England in the European Championship qualifiers, could hardly do anything right and the introduction of Luis Boa Morte and Fabian Caballero simply gave the supporters something else to laugh about. Until he laid on Anelka's goal, Garde appeared set on creating some sort of record for conversions: wrong code, wrong ball.

Middlesbrough went away wondering how, in such promising circumstances, they could have failed to win at Highbury for the first time since 1939. One of the reasons was that in defending so deep for the last half-hour they invited the sort of equaliser that duly arrived. Robson felt his team could have done more to catch Arsenal on the break; even Steve Bould was pushing forward into the Middlesbrough half. "We could have counter-attacked more," he conceded, "and kept possession better when we had won the ball off their forwards."

BORO'S early goal was clinically conceived and executed. Paul Gascoigne, who now faces another suspension after a further booking — for a foul on Garde — began a move which saw Andy Townsend send in the overlapping Dean Gordon for a low cross. Deane nipped in front of Bould and Martin Keown to turn the ball past David Seaman.

Just past the quarter-hour Hamilton Ricard's crossfield ball found Deane striding into the penalty area from the left with only Seaman barring the way. There was a big space to the right of the goalkeeper but Deane shot straight at him. Later Mikkel Beck, having replaced Ricard, headed an equally simple chance wide.

Apart from a close-range shot from Marc Overmars, which Mark Schwarzer turned round the near post, their scoring attempts tended to be from too great a distance to worry the Boro goalkeeper. Until, that is, Anelka eased Arsenal's discomfort with his seventh goal of the season.

Wenger praised his team's energy and character but with Petit unlikely to return before Christmas, growing doubts about Adams coming back at all and Bergkamp even more of a mystery wrapped within an enigma, these are uncertain times at Highbury.

Television and radio

The weather in Europe

Monday 1st

plus Media

A high-contrast, black and white image showing a close-up of a curved banner with the letters 'A R B E I T' visible. The banner is set against a background of dense, dark foliage.

Of my night was a well known theatrical impression, one of Anglo-Jewish success stories. He had come to hear witness, to heed the word of Elie Wiesel: "Never shall I forget three things, even if I am condemned to live as long as God himself." The coach ride from Krakow airport to Auschwitz takes an hour.

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[illegible][illegible]

TOP: THE LATE 1940S. BOTTOM: 1951-52. THEATRONS 0500 800 100 or send a cheque for £10 to: **London W3 8LN.**

IT'S A FUNNY OLD WORLD

Central London

The Paramount Comedy Channel is a young, innovative cable and satellite channel, offering a wide range of comedy programming. Paramount has a strong track record in the production of comedy series, and is now looking for a Senior Designer to join its team. The successful candidate will be responsible for the design and production of all on-air and promotional material, including graphics, titles, and animation. The role involves working closely with the production team to ensure that all designs are of the highest quality and meet the needs of the channel. The successful candidate will also be responsible for managing the design team and ensuring that all deadlines are met. The role is a full-time position and offers a competitive salary and benefits package. If you are a Senior Designer with a strong background in comedy programming and a passion for design, we would like to hear from you. Please send your CV and a cover letter to the Paramount Comedy Channel, c/o Paramount Pictures, 1400 Avenue of the Stars, Century City, CA 90045, USA. We are an equal opportunity employer.

[illegible]

Graphic Designer (Print)

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Ref: P0069/P0071

[illegible]

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— THE ECHOING VAIL — BUT THEN ONE DAY —

JUST LIKE EVERMIN
SUPPDEALLY BINGO!
YOU REAN ERMINIE!!

BY GARRY

I REMINDED HIM THAT BEN CHARLES DICKENS WROTE IN *HOUSEHOLD WORDS* IN 1850, FROM "AND HIS CHAMBERLAIN."

I TOLD HIM HOW COULDS TRY TO GETHER AT NEW YORK LIBRARY FOR NEW INSTANTLY. HE ANSWERED THAT THE

AND THAT
GIVE
DO THE
GIVE
SQUADS
I

WOW!!!

REPORT THE LITTLE NEEL BEHAVIOR

BACK?

BY KELLY JONES

Illustration Quik! Greenwell Books (Vol 1-5), telephone 0500 500 102 or send a cheque to Quik! Greenwell Books, 250 Western Avenue, London W9 3BN.

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— WHAT TO LEARN TO LIVE —

14 Appointments

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1000 YEARS

To mark the end of the second millennium, the Guardian's website is conducting a whistle-stop tour of 1,000 years of world history. Each Monday we publish the highlights here.

Day 981: 1194-1198

After more than a year in the comfortable custody of Holy Roman Emperor Henry VI, King Richard was freed in early 1194. Back in England, he was greeted as a hero, which is curious: for the second time in four years he had all but bankrupted the kingdom.

Day 982: 1198-97

Not for the last time, aggrieved Londoners protested against an unpopular ruler. This time it was William I, the Conqueror, who was forced to flee the country. He sought sanctuary but officials dragged him out, strangled him and buried him through the streets to York, where he was hanged.

Day 1001: 1198-99

Following the death of Henry VI in 1197, there was no obvious successor. Factions formed around Otto of Saxony and Philip of Swabia - the Guelphs and the Hohenstaufens - and in 1198 both were crowned by their followers. Civil war was inevitable.

Day 1011: 1200-1201

No reliable statistics exist on the population of England at the end of the 12th century, but it is estimated to have been between three and three and a half million. Trade was steadily increasing - especially in wool, England produced 20,000 sacks of wool from about six million sheep, accounting for more than half the national economy.

Day 1021: 1202-1203

In central Asia, a new power was emerging. The Mongols, a relatively tiny nomadic tribe, crushed another nomadic tribe, the Tartars, with the help of their inspired general: his name was Genghis Khan.

Day 1031: 1204-1205

In April 1204, Eleanor of Aquitaine, aged 52, Henry II had treated her appalling; but after his death in 1189 she had helped to hold together the kingdom while Richard, her favourite son, was away on the Crusades.

Day 1041: 1206-1207

In 1206 the prince of Gwynedd, Llywelyn ap Iorwerth, was granted the title of King of Wales. But as he was, after all, only Welsh royalty, the daughter he got was Joan, who was illegitimate.

Day 1051: 1208-1209

Read the full reports daily at www.guardian.co.uk/millennium

Then came the tragic roll-call... my uncle Daniel (above), who fell in a work camp after being taken from his family

us to carry as we climbed down into the coal of the only gas chamber not destroyed by the SS as Russian troops approached. Standing under the gas in the ceiling where the Cyclon B had been stowed upon naked Jewish bodies, the tears flowed. A faint smell of burning, from the preserved crematorium next door, intensified the effect.

After Auschwitz, our coach made the short journey to Birkenau, a site in the other inmates, which resulted in the death of Jews who could not be burnt in time. Looking down at the other camp as it is possible to be, the entrance, along the railway tracks, was used in the opening scene from Spielberg's film *Schindler's List*. But what on the other side is far as the eye can see are the rough wooden barracks and chimneys of the Nazi death factory. The story, which catches the breath because of its vastness, inside the barracks, the roughly hewn wooden bunks, which held five or six souls, remain intact. In the centre of the room, crude, unfinished concrete latrines, with drains running through the barracks, catch the eye. More than 1,000 people in each barracks, each with a life expectancy - if they survived the selection - of six months. Grass now grows around the buildings, but at the entrance, where our feet sank into the mud and ash, one could almost smell the faeces and urine which would run down the pits.

We walked for a mile or so down the side of the railway that brought the cattletrucks of Jews, Gypsies and political dissidents from every corner of occupied Europe. Journeys of 2,000 kilometres or more, without water or food, journeys on which the corpses would outnumber the living. I recalled Shindler describing her departure from Hungary: the Jews begged for water through the cattle truck openings, and were offered solid aluminium blocks. At the end of the track, Marcus stood atop the blown-up debris of Crematorium 2, in which up to 1,000 people a day were incinerated, and delivered his sermon.

ever spotted a family member. "Yes," she replied, definitively. "Yes, they have." She then revealed that since she began working in this place, six years ago, she had discovered that one of her uncles - with Jewish blood - had died here.

The most bizarre exhibit of all was a room filled with artificial limbs, trusses, surgical supports and medical devices torn from the disabled before they were bundled into the gas chambers. The limbs blended into one another like the shapeless bodies on the old newsreel footage of the clearing up operation.

Out in the bitter cold, we sheltered from the weather beneath a ledge of Block 10. This was a gruesome spot for the guides, on auto-pilot, talked of the sterilisation experiments that went on behind us. My mind floated back to the whispers of my childhood: Waiting my Auntie Susie in Hendl Hempstead after she had given birth to a tiny baby kept alive only by the skills of modern medicine. Mengel and his henchmen had experimented on his father's sisters, who were barely out of puberty. Yet they were moved to suburban Britain, they were with difficulty able to conceive.

The physiological scars may have healed, but the psychological impact has descended down the generations. Adjacent to Block 10, where the wind-downs were blocked out, is the "Wall of Death". Where thousands of prisoners, having been tried by Gestapo kangaroo courts, were summarily sent on carts to the permanently smoldering funeral pyres.

Adjacent to the wall and surrounding barbed wire stands the new empty Carmelite monastery and the field of crosses which has caused such serious offence to the Jewish communities. There, Marcus' ten-year-old son, Daniel, was killed in 1992, when President Chaim Herzog of Israel had visited the camp, there was "not one small Jewish monument" in a place which had been filled and surrounded by Christian imagery. It was a potent message for

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Diary Victor Lewis-Smith, paid a fraction of money by the London Evening Standard for his witty and original thoughts on television, seems to understand the word witty but stumbles over the word original.

Here he is writing in the Standard in June 1994, about GMTV: "Next we moved to Mr. Mottator, a black Himmer, looking like a body stocking to tight you could see his sex. In fact, done up you could see his religion." And here he is with some "original" thoughts on GMTV in last week's Standard: "The black Himmer who habitually dressed in a body stocking so tight that you could see not just his sex but his religion too."

And here is Victor "original" Lewis-Smith writing again in the 1994 article "The network's acute response to the recent damning report has been to engage Blue Peter's Anchor Turner, a rare example of a presenter leaving a children's show and going intellectually downmarket." And here are some more "original" thoughts in last week's Standard: "They tempted Anchor Turner away from Blue Peter and onto their sofa. It must have been the only known example of a presenter leaving a children's show and going intellectually downmarket." Max Hastings, editor of the Standard, will be delighted.

World in Action has got into a bit of trouble in Glasgow. The programme engaged a number of actors to practice up and down Squidichell Street with anti-Squidichell T-shirts, "telling" to details next week...

Get the British angle on European affairs

EUROPE
The Guardian

What do women really want?



NO

YES

Last week Oprah said she was backing an all-new women's TV channel for America. What a stupid idea, says Muriel Gray

Huh. Here we go again. Oprah Winfrey and other assorted screw-ups shoulder-padded women TV executives have decided that it's time for an American women's TV channel. Of course the "who cares" factor is large, but the hazard of such a creating plan (igniting even a brief chattering-class debate in Britain is sufficiently irritating to warrant a reminder of why the idea stinks).

Do British women need their own channel? Not really. They already have five, and those are merely the terrestrial offerings. This is not a subjective opinion. This is not a fact. The majority of people who watch television, all television, everything from soap operas to documentaries, from sitcoms to New At Ten, are women, with just about the single exception of sport. If you can't attract women viewers to your programme, you simply won't get ratings.

The important thing to remember in programme making is that while it is safe to alienate male viewers, it is suicide to do the same to females. Take Top Gear. The uninformed would point to that as a very specific piece of men's programming. Not so. It is a perfect example of a man's interest presented and packaged to attract women. You don't get over

four million viewers on a minority channel by only appealing to sales reps from Preston and bearded chaps in anoraks. You desperately need their wives and mums.

So how do they do it? For a start they never do anything as grimy and technical as look under the bonnets of cars. All the shots are star-filtered pinwheel pornography presented by unthreatening dead old chaps who still wear jeans in their forties, and tell us as much about the upholstery and redlining seats in the vehicle as the performance. Occasionally a posh bird will turn up to present as item on slow electric cars, and of course Clarkson is funny and anachronistic, makes everyone laugh, and as a consequence even the much-maligned bulk television viewer, Mavis from Wigan, fancies him enough to tune in every week.

So although it is marketed as a man's show, it is studiously careful to keep the women. The same principle does not apply in converse to women's-interest programmes. Men, quite frankly, can sod right off. Channel 4's rating success with Shes Gotta Have It — a show where women shop — is a case in point. There is nothing innovative about it, merely the scheduling genius of bringing an ancient daytime formula to evening and letting a couple of million stupid women enjoy it. The chan-

nel isn't interested here in attracting another million equally stupid men to share those television shopping trips with the overexcited participants. They're all down the pub. Here the programme merely allows low-achieving women to fantasise about "putting a look together" in privacy without the searing vituperation of their male partners.

And what's more, the advertisers know that now's the time to remind mum that farmfoods can make her smile, and it's time to go to Iceland to stock up with some frozen processed potato products to keep the family ugly and unhealthy.

But our doesn't simply require these two contrasting shows to prove the point. Look at the four top-rated shows in the country — Coronation Street, Heartbeat, EastEnders, and Emmerdale — and try fruitlessly to convince yourself that these are not almost exclusively female-orientated products.

You don't get over four million viewers by only appealing to bearded chaps in anoraks. You need their wives and mums

City of words

John Ryle

Oh, brave new seedless world

Drifting down the aisles of my local late-night Tesco, lulled to a trance by ant-rated lighting, drunk on the aroma of consumerism, I find myself in the fruit and veg section, directly palpating a half-price apple, scanning the date-price-time-expired plums for bruises and patches of inelegant decay, while struggling with thumb and forefinger to prise open one of those tear-off plastic bags without dropping the fruit on the floor. At this point my eye is arrested by a label that carries the following warning: May Contain Seeds.

It is attached to an orange. At first I think it must have been misapplied, or mischievously transferred by a customer, maybe from a box of walnuts. But no, it seems that every orange in the tray bears a tiny stick-on label with this warning, alongside the country of origin. Has there been a health scare, perhaps, linking the seeds of citrus fruit to Alzheimer's Disease? Aflatoxins? Veggiebugs? Veggiebugs? Veggiebugs? Not that I can remember. A passing self-stacker explains, with a wary air, that some customers like to be kept informed of these things.

But what kind of customer would be unaware that an orange has seeds? Seeds are what fruit is for, a form of packaging like the styrofoam round the hi-fi, like the corrugated cardboard that lines a device, jarring animals to eat and reduplicate seeds through their digestive tracts. The self-stacker shrugs. As though to say, what's more of a nuisance, a customer who doesn't know what seeds are for, or one who demands footnotes on labels, or one who doesn't know he is in a supermarket rather than in a state of nature? Most people prefer seedless, he says. "They're seedless, you know."

Salsa, I learn from Tesco's publicity department, are the big growth area in fruit sales, selling at the rate of seven million a week, increasing at 10 per cent a year. Not because they are particularly tasty, nor because of their life-giving properties, nor because they have a longer shelf-life, but because they are pip-free. Unlike your orange, or your tangerine, or your clementine or your common-or-garden mandarin, the

salsama grows without seeds. And what customer surveys reveal, according to Tesco's press release, is that the surge in salsa sales is due to a widespread fear of eating oranges and other citrus fruits in public, due to the embarrassment of spitting out the pips. Oranges are not the only fruit in Tesco's message to the eating public (I paraphrase); this is the age of the salsama.

According to their press release, the Tesco investigators "stumbled across a whole world of worry that no one had ever talked openly about before". "Customers," they report, "held lengthy conversations while holding pipe between their teeth and their gums." These customers are trying to discreetly remove pips from their mouths while pretending to read newspapers.

Is that what you are doing at this moment perhaps? Affecting to read the paper while secretly struggling with a recalcitrant citrus fruit? Perhaps you are so distracted getting the pips out of your teeth that, like Tesco's press officer, you forget to remove the spit-infused from your prose. In which case, it is my duty to solemnly warn you that Oranges May Contain Seeds, and moreover, News-papers May Contain News (which may also leak in your gilet). Tesco should surely display this warning on their news-stands, taking the occasion to draw readers' attention to newspapers such as the Sport or the Star that are, salsama-style, more or less news-free.

Shopping is filled with risk for those who yearn for seedlessness. Cherries may contain stones; meat may contain bones; there are dangers even at the florist's, for, in case you were unaware, Roses May Contain Thorns. Life is like porridge: it has lumps in it. So it is only fitting that Tesco should launch its salsama project, their crusade for a seedless world at Christmas, the season of miracles. A virgin birth, a rose without a thorn, a seedless fruit that is conceived without fertilisation: it all fits.

6 | Appointments

We are an internationally operating group of companies. Our core business lies in the growing market of multilingual processing of data and documents of all kinds. We currently employ, at our headquarters in Bertrange, Luxembourg, and our subsidiary companies in German-speaking countries, more than 300 staff from all 15 European Union Member States. In order to support this current expansion we are looking for a

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The Guardian Monday November 30 1998

INSEAD

INSEAD, the leading international business school, located just south of Paris, seeks candidates with an international background for the following position:

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and in Suttgart on February 11 & 12, 1999.

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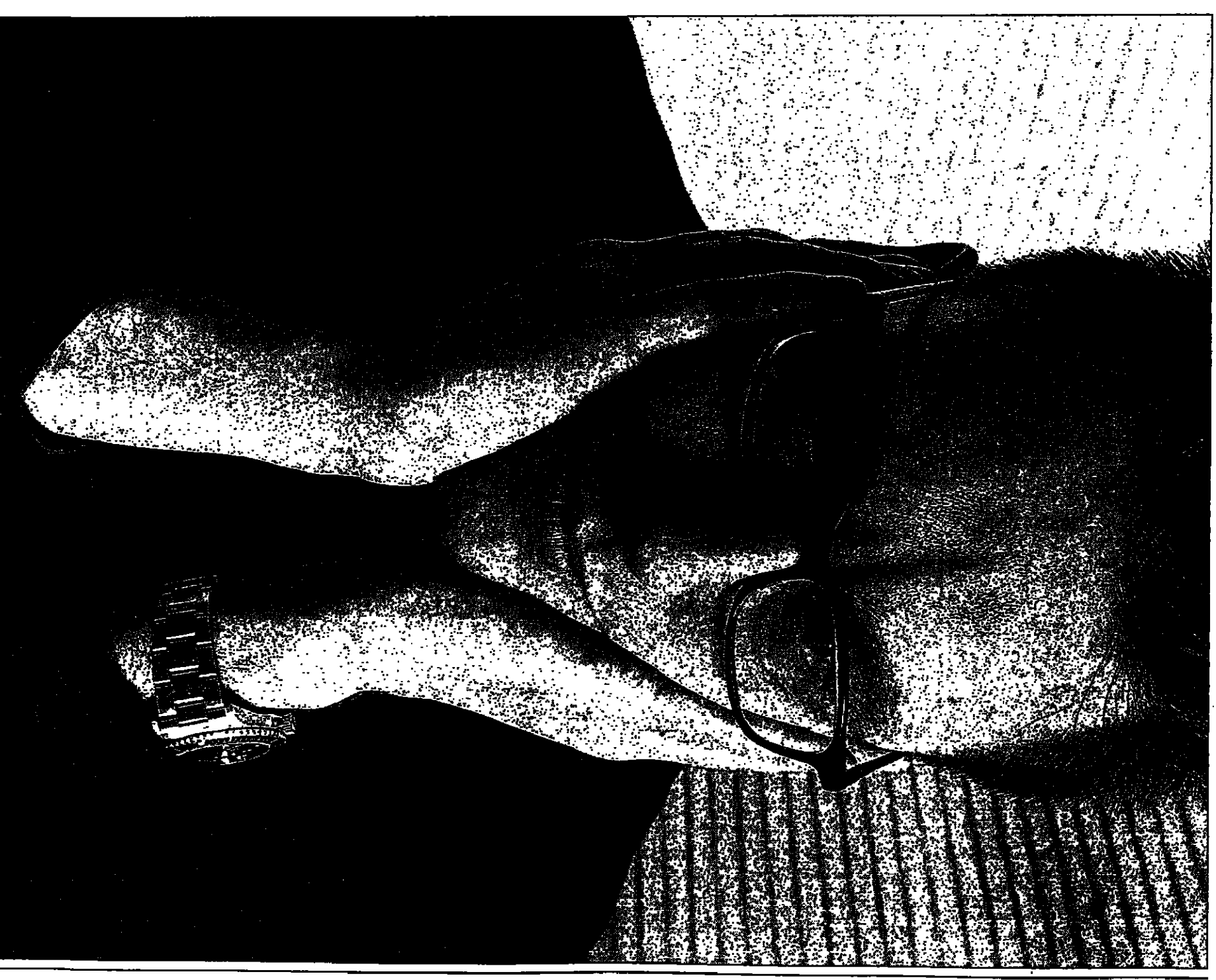
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Monday November 30 1998 The Guardian



My media



Clarissa Dickson Wright

Oasis and Loaded, Southwell says in his book, both experienced massive overnight success, both celebrated life and got people excited, doing everything their own way, not caring what the literary said, cooking a snook at the establishment.

With Oasis also off the boil, it's a revealingly risky parallel. What's Loaded's success also based on that's where that attitude of feeding for yourself comes from. Add house into doing things they would have thought before were impossible. It said there were no rules, no boundaries, just as Loaded did.

So the magazine is a product of its times, inevitably less likely to flourish in Tony Blair's Britain? "I'd say the side of the reader that likes flavoured leadership — first capt-

magazine's mid-nineties heyday? Loaded, according to Southwell's own account, was the bastard child of Thatcherism and ecstasy, which both unleashed dreams. So many British working class people are limited in their expectations of life, but we're Thatcher's children — though I'm definitely not a Thatcherite — and that's where that attitude of feeding for yourself comes from. Add house into doing things they would have thought before were impossible. It said there were no rules, no boundaries, just as Loaded did.

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chous and bulging (Brown p.2), then uninspirational (Harrison) — is centred to Southwell's analysis of how Loaded lost the plot after the champagne superlative years, the way IPC failed to build on the magazine's phenomenal success is also crucial. "The Loaded brand has never really been launched in America, to launch it around the world, to build an empire." Back in 1996 after a drink with the editor of E! Entertainment, Southwell proposed this to IPC, but was mysteriously rebuffed. "No one wanted to think it was some sort of unrepeatable fluke."

Now he has corporate backing, with publishing director Robert Thame announcing plans to launch in the US, Australia, South Africa and Russia, spin-off titles, such as a football magazine and an annual awards extravaganza ("Q and NAB already have to use a mixture of documentary and dramatised reconstruction. Who would play him? "Johnny Depp." And James Brown? "Crispy the Clown."

Getting on with it... "There are no limitations on what Loaded can do," says Southwell.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW DUNN

the US, Australia, South Africa and Russia, spin-off titles, such as a football magazine and an annual awards extravaganza ("Q and NAB already have to use a mixture of documentary and dramatised reconstruction. Who would play him? "Johnny Depp." And James Brown? "Crispy the Clown."

Getting on with it... "There are no limitations on what Loaded can do," says Southwell.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW DUNN

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Women

The age of dissent



A matter of fact

Olga came round in one of her favourite jumpsuits which she found in an Oxford shop. It is brightly coloured, decades old, hand-knitted and the wool slightly matted with age, but Olga loves it and so she is an artist, she knows it is beautiful.

My mother was horrified. She rummaged desperately in her cupboard and hunted out all her old jumpers, finding mother and knitted by herself, and begged Olga to take one. "It's better than that thing," she said in her forthright way, pointing at Olga's beloved woolly, knitted Olga was very keen on any mother's offering. She is to have it shortly for her birthday.

"I wouldn't wipe the floor with the one she was wearing," said my mother later. Perhaps she is learning fast. She kept the final damning critique until after Olga had left. This was no mean feat, for my mother. She usually sees left as an untruth. If someone looks a little, then she must tell them.

"But suppose they don't want to know?" I ask. "Tough. My mother cannot lie. 'You've got a fat bun,' she called out last week, seeing me outlined in a long pink skirt. 'It's the pink,' I shouted, ripped it off and put on a black one. But then I foolishly wore baggy trousers.

"Your bun is definitely getting fatter," cried my mother again and then she advised me to buy a wig. She is on a roll. Sporting Rosemary and the red wigging out for our dog walk, she felt a need to blunt the truth again. "You both look splendid," she called. I translated for Rosemary. Drudge.

This is nothing new. My mother has often nagged Rosemary. "Why do you wear those dark colours?" she has moaned on. "They do nothing for your complexion. You need a bit of colour." Rosemary doesn't even own a lipstick. My mother can scarcely move without one. Last night, Rosemary and I sat in her living room looking plain. "I'm not attractive," said Rosemary in a heart-rending way. "You are!" I shouted and Rosemary is smiling. After all this, she still admires my mother. "She's marvelous. So smart. She must have been sitting at her youth," says Rosemary. "I'll give you a lipstick for Christmas." Can my mother's harsh strategy be working?



Julie Clayton, an Australian whose naked body was found wrapped in a cloth in Lincolnshire in July 1984. ... The police had neither immediate leads nor a clue as to her identity. They used computer enhanced techniques to create the picture and in the end they were lucky: combined circumstantial and forensic evidence meant life for her murderer



Rachel Nickell, who was stabbed to death on Wimbledon Common in July 1992. ... Her killer has yet to be caught. Colin Stagg was cleared of the murder after the judge ruled that the case against him hinged on evidence obtained from a "hoax-trap" operation in which an undercover WPC posed as a girlfriend to elicit a confession

The three women pictured here are all dead, murdered by strangers. If they had been men, their cases would have been easier to solve. **Ros Coward reports**

To catch a killer

The frenzied killing of women by strangers has become an obsession of our times, one promoted by women crime writers such as Linda La Plante on television and M. C. Beaton in fiction. But these stories are ultimately reassuring, as the world of gory forensic detail inevitably delivers the criminal to the hands of justice, the reality is less clear.

Such crimes are rare in real life. Home Office statistics suggest there are approximately 20 killings of women by strangers each year. While violent murders of women may be rare, however, they have a disproportionate effect on the female psyche, limiting women's freedom of movement. They also often entail a lack of hard evidence and an uncertain outcome, as has been highlighted in current anxieties about Michael Stone's conviction for the killing of Lai and Megan Russell.

While fiction portrays a realistic picture of the police, in real life it can appear the police are incompetent at finding and prosecuting

them. So, in this sensationalised area, what are the real issues for the police? By definition, murders like those of Rachel Nickell and Lai and Megan Russell are difficult to prove because the victims have no connection with the perpetrator except in his fantasy. Unlike crimes committed for profit or revenge, psychosocial/psychological crimes have nothing to link them with a particular victim or victim.

In 1994, Lincolnshire police were confronted with just such a scenario when they found the naked body of a woman in a ditch. It had been there for three days, there were no immediate leads and it was three weeks before police found out the woman's identity, having used computer enhanced techniques to create a picture of her before she died.

The police came under immediate pressure to link this killing with others but, says Detective Superintendent Nick Howard of the investigating team: "You have to be your best. The priorities are scene-of-crime analysis, forensic evidence, house-to-house search. And you mustn't

hurry." Then it's the post-mortem. In this case, it revealed astonishingly high levels of anti-depressants. Eventually, the woman was identified as Julie Clayton, a young Australian who had briefly belonged to a small religious sect in Northamptonshire. Initially members came under suspicion but their information proved accurate and police traced her to St Austell. There they found people who knew she had accepted a lift in a battered van from a man claiming he had a yacht in Southampton. By a leap of lateral thinking, the van was traced and police found the owner had previously been cautioned for attempting to abduct a woman. The police had not pressed charges.

In Southampton, the "yacht" turned out to be a battered bulk-up ended in a scrapyard. But police found the man had stolen another yacht and lived another gift on board. Six, two, had escaped, swimming ashore in France, where again police accepted the man's denials. On the stolen yacht, they found a jar of ground-up anti-depressants. "We were pretty sure

then that what we had was a dangerous predator," Howard says. Here ends the stuff of police procedural fiction. But the real problem for the police in cases like this often lies in the extreme difficulty of getting a conviction. In the wake of scandals about improperly obtained evidence, police no longer pin any hope on confession to produce evidence in court. The suspect has not heard before. The defence will drive holes through any shaky evidence, yet this is in the nature of such trials. Forensic evidence is rarely definitive and even identification parades can be undermined. Had Colin Stagg's trial for the murder of Rachel Nickell proceeded, it would have depended on circumstantial evidence. In Michael Stone's case, witnesses were convicted criminals who can be unreliable — other they are attention-seeking or they are returned to prison where grasping is the worst crime of all.

In Lincolnshire, the police were lucky: combined circumstantial and forensic evidence meant life for the



Lin Russell, who was battered to death with a hammer in Kent, in July 1996. ... Michael Stone was last month convicted of the murders of Lai and Megan. Then earlier this month, Barry Thompson, a key witness in the trial, was arrested following his allegation that he committed the murders. Stone is now planning an appeal

murder. But such cases always leave questions: was the one predator among many or had he done it before? Police thinking has finally begun to address this question. In May 1997, they were sufficiently concerned about unsolved murders of women to set up Operation Enigma to re-examine 207 cases. "It was not easy to obtain a global view of the extent of the problem," says David Phillips, chief constable for Kent and chair of the Crime Recally which handles this interface data collection. "In spite of our best efforts after the Ripper case, we were not convinced it was good enough." As a result, they inaugurated a national data-collection and analysis project, to "link related crimes or improve crime scene assessment."

Operation Enigma concluded that there were 21 possible clusters of murders and handed this information to the relevant police stations last April. "Clusters is as definite as they are prepared to be. It's not easy to link killings but you create enormous media interest if you do."

Phillips says. Not that media interest is always helpful. "If a serial killer knows he's being sought, he might say his methods. Police insist that become clichés are avoided by killers: the idea of a serial killer keeping anniversaries has become worthless."

Investigation. "This is not the kind of offender profiling glamourised by Cackler." That's another way item for the media and people have false expectations of what it can deliver," Phillips says. "More important is crime scene assessment, officers ability to develop a theory of why this victim, this place, this crime. Then we can bring in a psychologist to work on it. So do they have any understanding of the sadistic hatred of women that seems to be involved in such murders? That's part of the picture," Phillips says. "Men who murder like this depersonalise their victims. Their attitude to humans in general is psychopathic because they feel no empathy. Attitudes to women come into it because of the sexual component of these crimes." He does not belittle the significance of sexual sadism. "It's a myth that police don't take seriously sexual crimes against women. Take them very seriously. With cases of stranger rape and abduction, there is always the potential for progression to homicide."

Phillips' attitude certainly makes a shift. Police often categorise these crimes as "novelty"; Home Office statistics on reasons for homicide do not include sexual sadistic motivations — and something beyond comprehension is beyond solution. Operation Enigma and the new sensitivity to violent crimes against women are symptoms of a move that is important changes in police culture. Penalties may not give them credit for it, but improvements in the police's ability to trace and prosecute would have very direct effects on how safe women perceive themselves to be.

A result of Operation Enigma, a Serious Crime Bureau has been established with long-term objectives. It is accumulating data on homicide, stranger rape and abduction in order to build "a theory of murder and a theory of

What a bunch of bankers!

Last week, a City trader's encounter with a strip-teg program made front page news. Everyone laughed. Or did they? **Raeisha Prasad** asks the few women on the trading floor how they felt

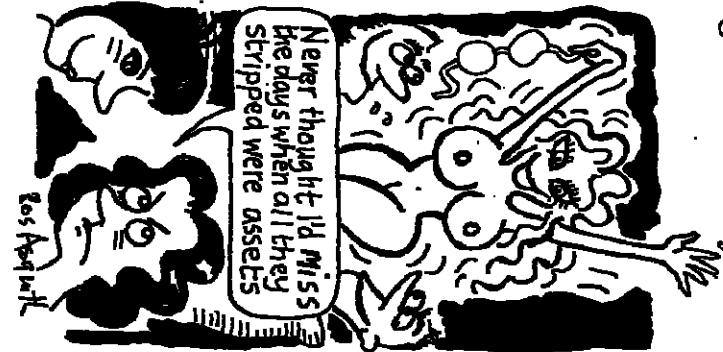
Come on, it's only a bit of fun. No harm meant. That's it. You know you haven't lost your sense of humour. Were you shocked by the stunt this week when a City trader, summoned to a meeting with his bosses at Deauville, Europe, with a strip-teg program, posing as an officer from regulatory body the Securities & Futures Authority. She was silent throughout the telling off for mislaying documentation, then she told him he was under arrest.

Moment's later, his colleagues crowded in and she began to strip. The incident is another reminder that this is where the masters, not the mindless, of the universe reside. It is doubtful if the trader himself employed such public humiliation but when there is a 10 to one men to women ratio at senior management level, how do female employees feel? An indication of just how isolated City women consider themselves is the fact that none would be identified for this article — even when they had something positive to say.

One investment bank employee said of the strip-teg incident: "It doesn't surprise me — traders are great jokes. I've loved working in the City but you have to be one of the lads, even if you're not really; you can't be a wallflower."

Others, however, complain about sexual bullying from lads who humoured a female staff to the trader who whipped his knob out on the desk. "One woman — a City analyst for 12 years — says the typical male trader is still 'adrenaline-driven, walking testosterone. In meetings, you're outnumbered and they'll ignore you. There's a lot of explicit humour aimed at you, but you have to try to laugh it off or you're accused of not being able to take a joke."

Helen Dornford, chairman (and of City Women's Network, says the display of "power" is so much part of City culture. "Power play is so much part of City culture. Bringing in a strip-teg is not about sex but about making someone feel small so you can feel big." However, there are signs that the "jokes" has characterised the City in the 1990s are becoming less funny. "The culture of the City has a long way to go, especially at senior levels," says Zena James of Oppenheimer 2000, a business-led campaign to increase women's participation in the workforce. "It's well behind most other sectors. But progress is being made: 18 months ago, Oppenheimer 2000 had no members from the City now they have six. If anything is turning the macho



women in the City, it's the arrival of American and other foreign employees at an establishment that until the early nineties was a bastion of British men. A female City analyst says: "The fact that the Americans are taking over so much in the City makes a strip-teg incident highly unusual. In the States or in Germany, you'd be sacked. People are frightened of being sacked and Britain is becoming more litigious." Only three months ago, a female trader at ABN-Amro alleged that she was demoted from her £33,000 per year trader position after having a baby. Although she lost her case, the threat of court action is a reminder that hostile behaviour can be brought to book. And a slew of sexual harassment cases have been filed and settled in the US against New York's biggest brokerage houses, including Salomon Smith Barney and Merrill Lynch. One filed in September against Gathen LLC, for \$10m in damages, alleges that male employees sexually harassed women by using obscene language and intimidation, and hiring strippers to perform on the trading floor. In the City's Exchange Square, today, a spokeswoman for an international bank who does not want to be identified says: "Employing cross-culturally intrinsically new attitudes. The City is less dominated by old-boy networks and Oxbridge types. But every financial district in the world is behind when it comes to women. It's been male-dominated for such a long time."

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Elle magazine
Monday November 30 at 10pm

Sean Pertwee dons his waistcoat as JC — a one-time surfing legend starring the thirteenth year look of it. The girlfriend (Catherine Zeta-Jones) wants some commitment, the in-crowd need to be impressed. (Ewan McGregor) and Steven Macdonald have topped it all by getting involved in a kidnapping. Set in Cornwall's surfing community, *Elle* is a vibrant comedy thriller which explores a typically mislaid crime with warmth and humour.